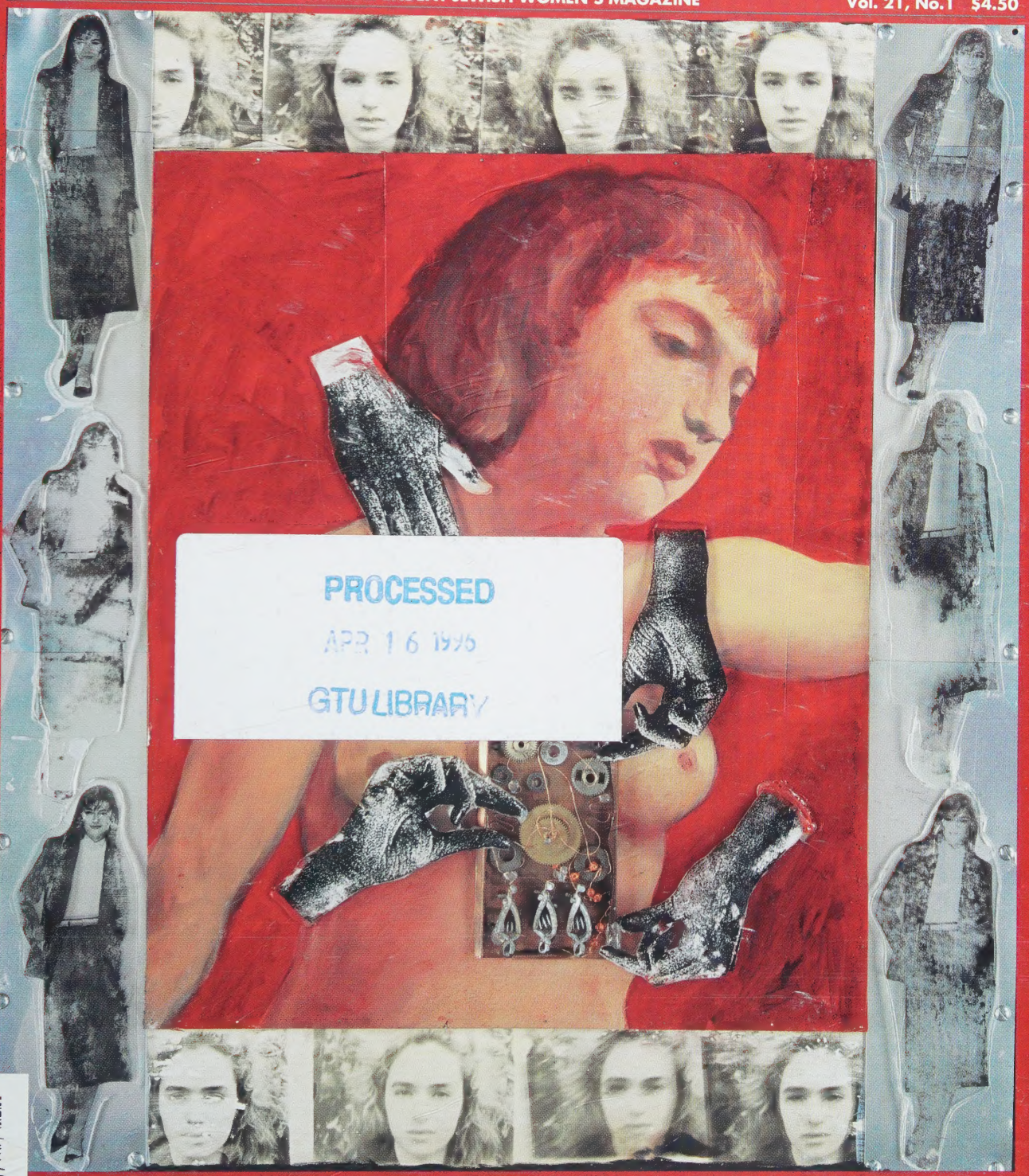
LILITH

SPRING 1996 THE INDEPENDENT JEWISH WOMEN'S MAGAZINE Vol. 21, No.1 $4.50



PROCESSED
APR 16 1996
GTU LIBRARY

- THE NEW JEWISH POPULATION: SINGLE MOTHERS BY CHOICE
- ABORTION, FICTION AND FACT
- TEEN GIRL ANGST

25274 74407 7

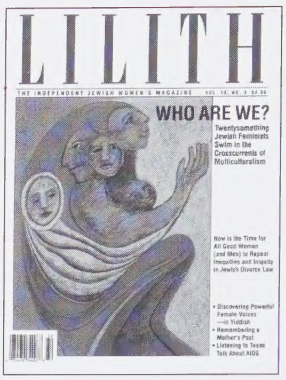
NOW YOU CAN ORDER REPRINTS OF LILITH ARTICLES

Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse in the Jewish Community

- **Wife Abuse, Drugs and Silence**
- **How Jewish Law Views Wife Beating**
- **Israeli Feminists Dramatize Violence against Women**
- **The Last Taboo—Dare We Speak About Incest?**

$4.50

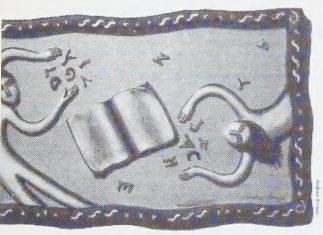
Twentysomething Jewish Feminists



- **Identity Politics at Summer Camp**
- **Herefords, Hebrew and Me**
- **"I'm Tired of Checkin Off 'Other'"**
- **Young Women Activis to Watch during the Next 18 Years**

$10

Teaching from LILITH



- **Go & Learn: A Resource List for Jewish Women's Education**
- **Shabbat at the Nursing Home.** Follow a mother-daughter volunteer team, meet a 14-year-old altruist and hear her creative volunteering ideas.
- **The Explosion in Jewish Women's Popular Music**
- **"A Foretaste of the Prayer Book to Come"** Prayers and blessings we can utter with conviction—in English and in a re-imagined Hebrew. How new liturgy evolves.
- **Battling Sexism in Jewish Schools**
- **Five Women's Holocaust Memoirs (and How to Teach Them)**
- **New Jewish Feminist Teaching.** A directory of 9 new curriculum ideas for/about Jewish girls and women, to incorporate into formal classes or adult discussion groups.
- **Boomers & Bat Mitzvah**—doing it a little differently

$10.00

Women and Yiddish

- **Singing to Save *Yiddishk*** Adrienne Cooper, feminist Yiddish singer, on why teach Yiddish musi
- **"A Woman's Wrath"** Fre translated from the work of the gre Yiddish storyteller I. L. Peretz.
- **"God of Vengeance"** The Roaring 20's lesbian play that rocked Broadway, from Yiddish wr Sholem Asch.
- **Dora Wasserman: Grand Dame of Yiddish Theater**
- **The Real *Yentl*: Esther Singer Kreitman, Isa Bashevis Singer's Neglected Sister**
- **"The New World"** An eerily autobiographical short about a newborn daughter—an infant whose realities fail to l to her own *prenatal* expectations.
- **Mother Nature and Human Nature: the Poetry of Malka Heifetz Tussman**

$1

Please send me this great reading from LILITH today!

___ copies of **Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse in the Jewish Community** ($4.50 each)

___ copies of **Twentysomething Jewish Feminists** ($10.00 each)

___ copies of **Teaching from LILITH** ($10.00 each)

___ copies of **Women and Yiddish** ($10.00 each)

☐ I am enclosing payment of $_____
(checks payable to LILITH Publications, Inc.)

☐ Please charge my _____ MC _____ VISA _____ AMEX

Account No. _____

Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Please mail to: LILITH
250 West 57th Street,
Suite 2432
New York, NY 10107-0172

VOLUME 21, NO. 1

LILITH

SPRING 1996

Lilith is named for the legendary predecessor of Eve who insisted on equality with Adam. After the Holy One created the first human being, Adam, the Holy One created a woman, also from the earth, and called her Lilith. Lilith said: "We are equal because we both come from the earth. . . ."
(From *The Alphabet of Ben Sira*, 23a-b)

Four Teen Tales

THE ANGST OF TEEN-AGE JEWISH GIRLS IN THE 1950's, 60's, 80's AND 90's

8 DATING MIKE EPSTEIN
by Diane Lutovich
What's the only Jewish girl in Hibbing, Minnesota gonna do for a sanctioned social life? Get shipped to Duluth for the ritual Saturday night grope.

10 "GAWJUS!" (LIKE BARBRA STREISAND)
by Marcy Sheiner
Barbra (unfixed nose & all) gave Jewish female faces, and their owners, new self respect. Here's how one fan worshipped her idol.

13 COMING OF AGE AS AN IRAQI JEW IN CALIFORNIA
by Loolwa Khazzoom
When multiculturalism was not yet a buzzword, it was hard to be young and Iraqi in Hebrew schools and youth groups where "Jewish" meant "Ashkenazi." Harder still to be young, female, and passionate about prayer in the Iraqi synagogue where only men and boys had value.

15 YOUNG TEENS TAKE BACK THE NIGHT
by Enid Schatz with Susan Schnur
YAY! The 90's are here! All the injustices of the previous decades can be righted by learning, marching, defeating those old stereotypes—a summer-camp exercise where girls and boys together fight sexism and repair the world.

Cover illustration by Emilya Naymark

DEPARTMENTS

2 FROM THE EDITOR

3 LETTERS

4 KOL ISHAH—NEWS OF JEWISH WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD
• Jews against Newt Gingrich • Journalists in Jerusalem (women in the margins) • A Jewish feminist conference on the Bay • Gender dances in NYC • And more. . .

27 THE CREATIVE EDGE
Art you can order!

38 REVIEWS
Paula Hyman on Jews and patriarchy; three intriguing new videos; a brief look at some noteworthy books.

42 TSENA RENA
LILITH's indispensable listings of resources: what to learn, where to go, how to lead, etc.

44 THE WAYS WE ARE: ROSH HODESH POEMS
by Lyn Lifshin
A trio to help us celebrate the New Moon, and our own bodies.

18 NEWS TO TURN THE WORLD
by Katie Singer
"My friend knows a man what can make me an abortion." A mother's unexpected umpteenth pregnancy in 1917 creates an unexpected poignancy for her oldest daughter.

Though Singer's piece is fiction, today's threats to reproductive

p.18

rights are not. LILITH takes a look at restrictive (and sometimes hidden) new anti-abortion legislation, and tells whom to contact, from the White House on down, to defend your rights.

24 MOTHERS WITHOUT PARTNERS—ON PURPOSE
by Terese Loeb Kreuzer
Headlines (and the Census Bureau) hail the new statistics: more middle class white women are choosing to have children alone. And Jewish women are overrepresented in this new crop of well-educated, financially solvent single mothers by choice. Here's why they're doing it.

PLUS—"You Don't Have a Daddy, You Have a Donor," Rabbi Julie Greenberg's communcations with her young daughter.

p.24

FROM THE EDITOR

Here it is—another demographic trend with Jewish women in the forefront. All women in the Western world now marry later (if at all), but Jewish women are waiting even longer than the others. All women stay in school longer than ever before, but Jewish women are the best educated women in the U.S. today. All this we've heard before. What's new now? Jewish women are significantly overrepresented among the growing numbers of unmarried, well-educated, self-supporting women in their thirties and forties who are having children without partners. Why? The reasons are complicated.

Partly, as you'll see in the articles in this issue, the phenomenon is driven by a Jewish urge to have a role in creating that next generation—a natural generative urge for everyone, but with special poignancy for Jews. But another reason has to do with the shrinking numbers of eligible Jewish men as mates, both because of rising intermarriage rates of the men and because of the later age at which Jewish women seek them out (the majority of women still want to marry men who are older than they are, so with each year of age an unmarried woman faces a smaller pool of older men in her "field of eligibles"). This explains why Jewish women are twice as likely to be single as other white American women (15% will be single through their childbearing years, as compared with 7.5% of other white women, the control group for the statistics in the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey).

S. J. F.

One factor that these numbers don't let on: the main reason many Jewish women are now able to consider having and/or raising children alone is economic. For the first time, a whole sub-set of women do not need partners for financial or social support in order to become mothers. The rules have changed in a mere 20 years. Women's economic empowerment makes possible a whole different set of alternatives, one of which is that marriage and other long-term relationships can be entered into for their sense of shared purpose and pleasure, not merely because one member of the couple provides the money or the social context for the other to fulfill her biological, social and emotional role as a mother. Women now have the economic means to make very different life choices than their mothers did. For middle-class women, choosing to have kids alone is just one highly visible signifier of this alteration.

When we think of single parents, what comes to mind usually is a solitary parent raising children in the wake of divorce or death. The emergence of women who are consciously choosing this option (albeit, as reporter Terese Kreuzer points out, for some it is not their first choice), means that the Jewish community, especially those of us in it who operate under the banner of married privilege, should rethink how we welcome all Jews. Unmarried Jewish women exist in larger numbers than the community has heretofore recognized. Far more attention has been paid to the National Jewish Population Survey's findings on intermarriage than its findings about the ways single Jewish women are living their lives. The most poignant comment in the conversation Kreuzer and I had with various women who have chosen to be single mothers came from an Orthodox woman in California. Her social status rose dramatically after she adopted a child. "Aren't I the same person I was before?" she asks. "Didn't I need a community then, too?" No matter whom they choose to marry, eventually, or if they marry at all, single Jewish women are a population in need of the best outreach efforts of synagogues and all the Jewish organizations and agencies that claim to want to find and keep more Jews.

Susan Weidman Schneider

Your holiday here!

If Jewish holidays had been invented by women, would they be different? For an upcoming story on Fantasy Jewish Holidays, let us know what Jewish holiday you think needs to be invented or what holidays you think might have existed once, but were suppressed or forgotten.

Send your notions to: Susan Schnur at LILITH, 250 W. 57th Street, Suite 2432, NY, NY 10017.

Editor-in-Chief
SUSAN WEIDMAN SCHNEIDER
Editor
SUSAN SCHNUR
Managing Editor
NAOMI DANIS
Poetry Editor
ALICIA OSTRIKER
Fiction Editor
FAYE MOSKOWITZ
Advertising Manager
LESLIE HOLLIS MARGULIES
Art Director
LAURIE DOUGLAS
Editorial Assistant
KAREN BEKKER
Book Reviews
RACHEL KADISH
Interns
LISA LEPSON, SHARON LITWIN
ENID SCHATZ, SARAH WALLIS

Board of Directors
FRANCES BRANDT
BARBARA B. DOBKIN
YVETTE GRALLA
DEBORAH FULLER
FRANCINE KLAGSBRUN
BRENDA LIPITZ
NATALIE PELAVIN
RACHEL JOSEFOWITZ SIEGEL

Contributing Editors
DIANA BLETTER, E.M. BRONER, NINA BETH CARDIN, ELAINE S. COHEN, SUE LEVI ELWELL, REENA SIGMAN FRIEDMAN, RELA GEFFEN, BLU GREENBERG, JUDITH HAUPTMAN, HARRIET LERNER, ANN LAPIDUS LERNER, AUDREY FRIEDMAN MARCUS, JUDITH PLASKOW, NESSA RAPOPORT, SANDY E. SASSO, MARY CAHN SCHWARTZ, AMY STONE.
Founding co-editor *AVIVA CANTOR*

Thanks to these generous individuals and foundations who have made tax-deductible contributions to LILITH:

Sustainers: The Associated—Baltimore, Joyce Elsa Goodman, Yvette Gralla, Barbara Himmelrich, Doreen Hermelin, Rita J. & Stanley H. Kaplan Foundation, Brenda Lipitz, Mutual of America, Rachel J. Siegel, Slant/Fin Foundation, Henny Wenkart

Sponsors: Joan Alexander, Hinda Beral, Marjorie Blankstein, Judith Herr, the Huret Family, Barbara Hirschhorn, Bob Lamm, Judith Stern Peck, Phyllis Schaer, Bernard & Ruth Schnur, Caroline Sheinbaum, R.G.S. Silten, Evelyn Smith

Friends: Susan Askanase, Frona Brown, Rosalee Davison, Ruth Dickstein, Rabbi Ellen W. Dreyfus, Claudette Einhorn, Rabbi Rosalind Gold, Blu Greenberg, Michal Hillman, Corinne Krause, Lynn Kroll, Shirley Blanc Romaine, Lea Rosendahl, Louise Silk, Sandra Simon, Emily Sunstein, Barbara S. Sussman, Bracha Werber

Donors: Isabel Appleroth, Anaya Balter, Marilyn Baron-Strongin, Susan Baumgarten, Sylvia Becker, Jewel Bellush, Sally Benbasset, Beverly Blatt, Eileen Breakstone, Betty Buckshaw, Rachel J. Buff, Shirley Jan Chamoi, Rabbi Steven Chester, Diane Claerbout, Michele Clark, Rabbi Hillel Cohn, Marion Danis, Ida Davidoff, Jonina Duker, Pearl Elias, Lisa Grant, Marilyn Graubart, Trudy Groberg, Brenda Halperin, Lisa K. Happ, Judith Hauptman, Barbara Heeger, Rikki Horne, Glen & Leonie Janken, Lili Jessula, Susie Kirschbaum, Rena. S. Kleiman, Beverly Kort, Cynthia Leder, Linda Lee, Nina V. Lehman, Willa Lewis, M. Lopin, Ilene R. Olansky, Rose Z. Ozan, Harriet L. Parmet, Neila Pomerantz, Ilene Prokup, Abe & Adelyn Raich, Joyce Rappeport, Carol Ritch, Marcia G. Rosenstein, Janice Rous, Paula Samuel, Merrill Schneiderman, Pineena Sheps, Doug and Cantor Linda Shivers, Fredelle Spiegel, Paula Spielberg, Norma Spungen, Lynn Tobias, Lee Weidman, Rabbi Shohama Harris Wiener, Laurie B. Workman, Arlene C. Zuckerberg

LETTERS

HOW TO REACH LILITH MAGAZINE:
LILITH WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, ARTICLES, FICTION, POETRY AND MEMOIRS. INCLUDE ONE-SENTENCE BIO, ADDRESS AND PHONE. FOR GUIDELINES OR RETURN OF MS. PLEASE ENCLOSE SASE: LILITH, 250 WEST 57TH STREET, #2432, NEW YORK, NY 10107. (212)757-0818, FAX (212) 757-5705. E-MAIL ADDRESS: LILITHMAG@AOL.COM

'OND BEIJING

nt to follow up on the U.N. nen's Conference in Beijing ly Brodkey: Why I'm Going ijing" Summer '95].

fter I came back, I orga- l a panel of women speaking different perspectives, to e with other Oregonians our riences at the conference. I ce as a Jewish woman. 're such a minority in the hwest that I thought it was ortant for people to hear e different voices.) A bling follows:

The opening ceremony for Forum was held on a hot ay afternoon in a packed npic Stadium in Beijing. My ish Israeli friend Miriam ed to the women sitting next er in the stadium and intro- d herself. They in turn intro- ed themselves to Miriam as g from an Arab state bor- ng Israel. I noticed all of their omfort and awkwardness.

A few minutes later, one of Arab women turned to am and offered her a full cup vater. Miriam accepted it, turned her head back toward and took a sip, her eyes filled n tears. Such a simple, bolic gesture by an Arab nan toward a Jewish woman ld have been unthinkable ten s ago in Nairobi....

Jewish women held work- os on creating alliances with an women, other women of or, and Palestinian women. ish women were able to tell stories of their lives to the ld....

Jewish women for the first time in twenty years at an international U.N. conference were able to focus their attention on the real issues that had brought them to Beijing, issues such as health care, domestic violence, education, women in decision-making.

Judy Brodkey
Portland, OR

LILITH suggests some follow-up:

- Get the Facts, *a bi-weekly one-page alert about Congressional actions affecting women and children. You can subscribe to receive this information by fax or e-mail. To find out more call Teri Bernardo at (202)728-7633, or write AAUW Voter Education Campaign, 1111 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20036.*
- The Washington Feminist Faxnet *(WFF), a weekly two-page update which deals with legislation, public policy, and social issues with an activism slant, and includes follow-up numbers. For more information: Center for Advancement of Public Policy, 1735 "S" Street NW, Washington, DC 20009, or call Martha Burk at (202)797-0606.*
- Women's Vote '96*: To help launch a broad-based campaign to educate women voters and get out the vote in 1996, call: Megan Contakes or Laura Good at (202) 835-3875.*

UP AGAINST THE WALL

One of the problems with Women at the Wall [the organization for women's right to full participation in public prayer at the Western Wall in Jerusalem] is that it is really (as far as I could tell the last time I was with them) "American Women at the Wall." Even more: "American Women Visiting Israel at the Wall." So the women win the right to pray out loud, to have a *minyan*, to hold a Torah there. What women will come to do so? And if a woman wants to have a *bat mitzvah* with her husband/lover/brother/father/son at her side? She still won't be able to, because, as Alice Shalvi has mentioned, the real problem at the Wall is the hegemony of the ultra-Orthodox. What we should be pressuring for is the right for other Judaisms to be represented. So of course I support women's right to pray/sing/hold a *minyan* at the wall, but if so few women *living* in Israel care, what, really, is it all about?

Miriyam Glazer
Los Angeles, CA

I found Susan Weidman Schneider's editorial [Fall 95] about her daughter's bat mitzvah at the Kotel (the Western Wall) beautiful, and I wondered how we might try to have a similar experience for our daughter.

Can you give us any suggestions on whom we could contact? How much prior arranging does it need? Also, I realize that the men are over on their side, but do they feel a part of the service? Can they hear?

Sandy Wasserman
Plainview, NY

[Editor's note: When Yael celebrated her bat mitzvah, the shaharit *service took place on the women's side of the kotel, with male relatives and guests looking over from the men's side, much as women typically have been "onlookers" for a bar mitzvah at the Wall. For the Rosh Hodesh Torah reading, a short distance from the Kotel itself, men were present and could see and hear, but stood off to one side. They were observers—guests—but not participants in the women-led service. I made arrangements a couple of months in advance; contact Chaia Beckerman in Israel at 011-972-2-786416 or Rabbi Gail Labovitz: galabovitz @jtsa.edu]*

WEDDING BLESSING

I was delighted to read the article and blessing created by Deborah and Steven Eisenbach-Budner for their wedding ["Spilling Out Wine: A New Wedding Blessing" Winter 95/96]. I found their acknowledgment of how same-sex couples are deprived of the privileges of marriage both hopeful and helpful.

Many Jewish gays and lesbians are seeking to establish Jewish homes. They want to celebrate Shabbat and holidays together, to be part of a congregational community and to create a bond between any children they may choose to raise in our tradition. They wish their choice of a life partner to be sanctified and blessed in the name of our faith. I believe that homosexual individuals who choose a life partner may, if they wish, have that commitment acknowledged by Judaism. When they yearn for this, I believe we should be there for them.

Rabbi Jerome K. Davidson
Temple Beth-El, Great Neck, NY

BSCRIPTIONS: Individual subscriptions $18/4 issues; institutions $24/ ssues. In Canada add $6/year; other overseas add $8/year. (US funds). Single copies $5. prepaid. Change of address, or delivery problems: d correspondence with subscription label to: LILITH, Dept. LIL, P. O. Box 00, Denville, NJ 07834, or call 800-783-4903 or 212-757-0818.

TAILERS: Contact any of these distributors to carry LILITH: DeBoer's 1-667-9300), Fine Print (800-874-7082), Ingram (800-627-6247), en Distributors (609-235-4444), L-S Distributors (415-873-2094) or all Changes (206-382-1980).

LILITH is published by Lilith Publications, Inc., a non-profit organization.
Copyright © Lilith Publications, Inc. 1996. All rights reserved under international and Pan American Conventions.
Associate member American Jewish Press Association. Indexed in Index to Jewish Periodicals. Available from University Microfilms International.

LILITH occasionally makes its mailing list available to organizations or publishers. If you do not want to receive such mail, please send label & request to the Denville address above.

"WOMAN'S VOICE." TRADITIONALLY, THE VOICE OF THE JEWISH WOMAN W
NOT TO BE HEARD IN PUBLIC, LEST IT AROUSE MEN. NO MORE. THESE PA
ARE MEANT FOR NEWS ABOUT JEWISH WOMEN, IN OUR OWN STRONG VOIC

A JEWISH FEMINIST CONFERENCE: HOW WE DID IT

Grassroots activists in San Francisco organized "Celebrating Diversity—Creating Community," a day-long conference last November. Eighty workshops throughout the day reflected the conference theme, with discussions on topics ranging from "A Jewish Response to Domestic Violence," "Jewish Lesbian Mothers" and "Jewish Women with AIDS." Speakers included author Tillie Olsen and witchcraft leader Starhawk. The sellout crowd numbered 1000.

Unlike the region's last Jewish women's conference in 1992, which was coordinated mostly by staffers of the local Jewish Federation, the 1995 event was run largely by grassroots organizers. For them, creating a sense of community was an important part of planning the event.

"We started each planning meeting with a *kavannah*, a teaching," said conference co-chair Serena Eisenberg. "We rotated facilitators and we consciously chose co-chairwomen of different ages and backgrounds. We specifically outreached to under-represented populations such as mixed-race Jews, disabled Jews, immigrants and Orthodox women."

"There was a great deal of talk about listening to each other and honoring each other," said co-chair Marriam Cramer Ring. "In fact, that was the whole essence of the conference. 'Celebrating Diversity—Creating Community;' that was a title but it was very important that we really live that title."

How do grassroots organizers plan a Jewish women's conference? Here's how the San Francisco area women made it happen.

1. Finding volunteers and setting goals. The project dates back to April, 1994, with an initial meeting of about 22 women. At four brainstorming sessions held in different locations around San Francisco, three goals evolved. "We had to have a place for 1000 women so we wouldn't have to turn anyone away. The diversity and community themes kept cropping up," Cramer Ring said.

2. Dividing Tasks. Volunteers met regularly and by June, 1994, they had decided on a one-day conference. In July, a group of 40 volunteers formed committees for programming, funding, outreach/publicity and follow-up. In October, the women submitted a grant proposal to the local Jewish Federation (which was quite supportive), and in November they confirmed the site and date. They formed a steering committee in December and Eisenberg and Cramer Ring were elected co-chairs.

JULIE BROWN

"Grandmothers of the Universe." Miri Hunter Haruach perfoming her one woman play in San Francisco.

3. Getting the job done. With months to go, volunteers worked st ily through 1995. In January, the fu ing committee sent 200 "Chai letters requesting $18 each—to friends relatives of volunteers for seed mo They mailed more letters to orga zations and businesses and filled additional grant applications.

Publicity began in February. In A a graphic artist began work on a logo registration brochures. Organiz settled on a vegetarian kos breakfast and lunch menu, and put a call for workshop proposals. keynote speakers, poet and acti Irena Klepfisz and executive dire of San Francisco's Jewish Family Children's Services Anita Friedm were invited.

By May, conference organiz received a $20,000 grant from Jewish Community Endowment F of the local federation. More gra totaling $5000, came through, donations and sponsorships top $12,000. These contributions hel pay expenses and allowed wome attend the conference who could afford the $45 registration fee.

About six weeks before conference, registration brochu were mailed. One month before, local Jewish bookstores agreed to their wares at the event and an ev coordination committee met at the to lay out the day.

Volunteers are already plannin multi-day event for the summe 1997 and plan to establish a lo Jewish Women's resource center.

–Lisa Alcalay K

For more advice on planning a Jew Women's Conference in your area, con the Jewish Women's Conference offi care of the Jewish Community Cente San Francisco, 3200 California Street, Francisco, CA 94118; (415) 292 1246.

Dance Pieces Explore Issues of Gender in Judaism

In bare feet, a black silk camisole and a crinoline, Heidi Latsky becomes the ambiguous tenth person in a *minyan* of nine formally dressed men davening silently with their backs to the audience. Latsky, a dancer/choreographer whose work explores ethnicity and gender through movement, recently performed a series of pieces at the 92nd Street YM-YWHA in New York City. "Recalling Jack (A Prayer for my Grandfather)," is set against a recording of her late grandfather's voice. In this piece, Latsky enacts her exclusion from the mourning rituals for her grandfather. Her conflicted role, as a woman in intimate, "improper," old-fashioned underclothes, is danced against the backdrop of a row of men, who leave an empty space for her worship but do not allow her to fill it. Her dance is a mix of binding, restraint, and liberation as she winds and unwinds tefillin from her arms and neck.

In program notes and audience discussion, Latsky describes, "The wearing of tefillin on the head and arms symbolically bonds the observer to God through the heart, soul and strength. Even less religious Jews wear tefillin, often during periods of mourning. Women have traditionally been excluded from this practice."

"It's Not What You Think," the title piece of this show, also deals with questions of power and gender, but in a way which made the audience laugh out loud. This elegant, stylized, and comical performance set to Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 is a *pas de deux* in collaboration with Lawrence Goldhuber, with whom Latsky has worked in the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zance Dance Company. Latsky (standing 5'2" tall and 100 pounds) and Goldhuber (at 6', 300 pounds) mirror each other, dressed identically in black leather vests, black jeans, and immaculate white shirts.

What begins as a simple physical comparison, however, quickly segues into a dance of high camp and style. Balancing strength and vulnerability, Latsky and Goldhuber strike exaggerated poses which cross lines of gender and sexuality, suggesting musclemen, ballerinas, clowns, children, and courtesans. Through gentle satire and acrobatic dance, they explore the trust, love, and anger in the shifting balances of power between men and women, as well as in their own relationship.

—Sarah Wallis

Heidi Latsky's dance company, "Riot of Red," will be touring the Midwest in upcoming months. For information on performance dates, contact her at (212) 268-0976.

Flying Victory for Women in Israel

s the myth of the Israeli women soldiers fighting side by side with the men finally about to become a reality? As LILITH reported in Spring 1995, Alice Miller, a 23-year-old soldier, the Israeli Air Force to court when she was barred from fying exams to become an Air Force pilot.

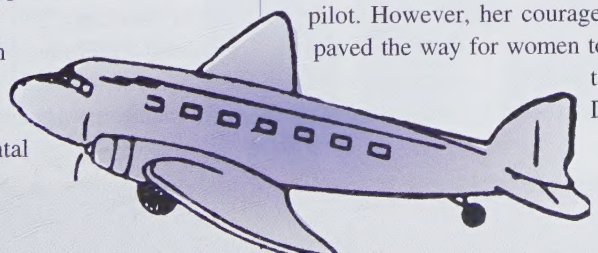
n November 8, 1995 the Israeli Supreme Court made a historic ion that ruled that the Air Force had illegally discriminated on asis of gender. Alice Miller, who already holds a civilian's pilot se, was then allowed to take the entrance exams to become a ter pilot. Aided by legal counsel from the Israel Women's ork and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, Miller won a ecision by the five member tribunal which includes two women. ce Dalia Dorner stated, "Barring women from the pilot-training se offends their honor and degrades them. It also validates the ading popular saying, 'Good men to the air force, good women e airmen.' Non-conscription of women to the pilot-training se means losing the potential of half the population— a condition h damages the entire society."

ollowing this monumental decision, both army and the Knesset have begun paration for changes in law and edure. The IAF is planning an experimental recruitment and flight-training program for women. Naomi Chazan and other women in the Knesset have drafted a bill that would allow women to volunteer to serve in other positions in the armed forces from which they are currently excluded.

Being a pilot is arguably the most prestigious post in the Israeli Defense Forces, which in turn leads to great respect and opportunity in civilian society. Until now, that respect and opportunity have been reserved only for men. The limitations placed on women in the army generate sexist attitudes in Israeli society and have created unequal opportunity for women once they return to civilian Israeli life. By giving men and women different jobs, not only does the army reinforce traditional sex roles, but it grooms men for positions of power in Israeli politics and business while it prepares women to be men's secretaries.

Even with the good intentions of some members of the Knesset and the support of civil rights and women's groups, progress may be very slow. Unfortunately, Alice Miller failed her tests to become a pilot. However, her courage to stand up to the government has paved the way for women to begin to make the vaunted myth of the gender equality in the Israeli Defence Forces a reality.

–Lisa Lepson



Straight Rabbis Fight For Gay Rights

A rabbi is not just a religious leader, a rabbi is also a community leader and a role model. As such, rabbis are in a position to help their communities set standards—standards of behavior and of tolerance. Rabbis can use their power to keep their communities stagnant and to encourage closed-mindedness and factionalization; or they can use it to work for change, set examples of social activism, and foster atmospheres of acceptance and openness. Two rabbis recently have been exceptional in this regard.

A few years ago, Ann Thal, a horse trainer who lives in Sarasota, Florida began looking for a synagogue where she and her partner, Julie Evonna, a mental health counselor, could feel comfortable about being openly lesbian. They had been going to services at a nearby Conservative synagogue, where, Thal says, "Everyone knew we were a couple, but it was only okay as long as no one talked about it." Thal and Evonna decided that if they were going to join a synagogue, it had to be a place that had a commitment to accepting lesbian families. They began checking out different synagogues in the area, and sent out letters asking about each congregation's attitudes towards lesbian and gay members.

Rabbi Huntting officiates at Ann and Julie's wedding.

One of the congregations that received their letter was the Reform Temple Sinai. Rabbi Geoffrey Huntting's first response was somewhat ambivalent. "I think he felt strongly about the issue at the time, but he was new and didn't want to shake things up," Thal recalls. However, a short while later, she found out that Rabbi Huntting was giving a lecture to his congregation about gays and lesbians in Judaism, and decided to go hear what he had to say.

Rabbi Huntting says that issues such as feminism and gay rights within Judaism have always been important to him. When he first met Thal, she told him that there was a sizeable gay Jewish community in the area, which had been largely disenfranchised by the general Jewish community. Rabbi Huntting knew that in some places there were specifically gay synagogues, but felt it was very important to invite gays and lesbians in to the larger Jewish community. As one of his congregants told him, "We go to synagogue because we're Jewish, not because we're gay."

When eventually Thal and Evonna wanted to join the congregation, Rabbi Huntting encouraged them to ask the Board to change its by-laws to have a more inclusive definition of the word "family." According to both Thal and Huntting, there was almost no disagreement or dissent from other members of the Board or the congregation. Temple Sinai's family membership is now extended to any adult with children or to any two adults living in the same house. Since this change, Rabbi Huntting's congregation has expanded to include many more lesbian and gay members, as well as many new straight members who like the atmosphere of tolerance an diversity. His influence has expande beyond the bounds of his own Templ Sinai: Temple Beth Sholem, the area' Conservative congregation, and nearby S Boniface Episcopal Church have bot made recent conscientious efforts t welcome lesbians and gays.

Another Rabbi was drawn to actio when prejudice became institutionalize as law in Cobb County, Georgia. Whe the County Board of Commissioner passed a resolution stating that "Life styles advocated by the gay communit should not be endorsed by governmer policy makers, because they are incom patible with the standards to which thi community subscribes," Rabbi Steve Lebow of Temple Kol Emeth took u the banner of lesbian and gay rights i his community.

Rabbi Lebow remembers, "when th resolution was first passed, I thought i would be immediately rescinded becaus it was just so outrageously disgusting. When it was first passed in August o 1993, he spoke out against it in some o his sermons, but didn't do much else When the Cobb Citizens Coalition, a organization which is active in fightin the resolution, asked him to attend thei press conference in March of the follow ing year, he was astounded by the fact tha there were no other heterosexual clerg present. Soon, however, he discovere that other religious leaders felt the sam way that he did about the discriminator statement, but were afraid to speak out "People who were gay were getting deat threats," he recalls of that spring.

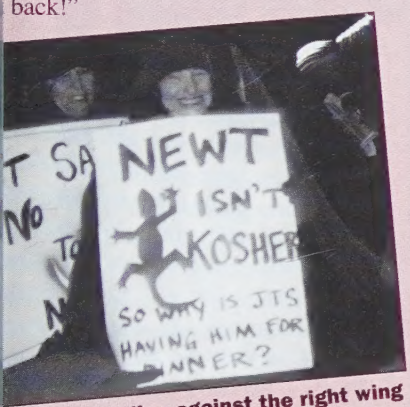
Dismayed at the inaction of th religious leaders in his area, he contacte other Jewish and Christian clergy to sign statement which protested the resolution Many leaders usually considere moderate and liberal were initially afrai to sign it, but in the end forty of them di so. After this statement was made public Rabbi Lebow says, "I was labeled as th radical fringe. I received phone calls tha

continued on page 40

My Dinner With Newt

his past winter, Newt Gingrich addressed an audience of 450 prominent Jews who had paid $1000 ce to attend a benefit dinner for the sh Theological Seminary in New York. Speaker of the House was introduced Mayer Mitchell (Chairperson of the d of AIPAC) as "one of Israel's best ds in Congress....a dedicated friend of Jewish Community." Over 300 Jews, y of them Seminary students, showed disagreement with this assessment by ling outside in the biting cold to protest s reception of Gingrich.

t the sidewalk rally, sponsored by Jews Racial and Economic Justice and an ad committee of JTS students, protesters ed placards reading "Newt isn't kosher, hy is JTS having him for dinner?" and chanted "Newt says cutback, we say back!"



M. Broner rallies against the right wing

Manhattan ough President Ruth Messinger, whose her worked in the Seminary's public ions office for 50 years, spoke at the , asserting that Gingrich's positions e antithetical to "Jewish values of ce, progress and service." Author E.M. ner, who was also scheduled to speak but decided to cancel due to the bitter weather, told reporters afterward, "The tragedy is the turning to the right of Jewish organizations. The Jewish Theological Seminary has implicitly accepted Gingrich's values by inviting him."

Meanwhile, inside the Pierre Hotel, Gingrich expounded on the importance of three core values: private charity, individual liberty, and military strength. "Giving money in a way that destroys others is not charity," Gingrich said, reminding his audience of welfare recipients' penchant for "spending their money on cocaine." He recommended private donations to non-profit organizations "such as Carnegie Hall." Stressing the need for a stronger military in anticipation of the "pre-terrorist era" in which we live he said, "It's not enough just to visit the Holocaust Museum and ask, 'how could they have been so blind?'"

Gingrich's speech was disrupted when two members of the audience suddenly stood up and shouted, "Who are you to say what the age of consent is? Why are you cutting Aid to Families with Dependent Children?" The two people were forcibly removed from the dinner.

Jael Meadow, who works at the Seminary, said that even though she's a "liberal Democrat," she enjoyed Gingrich's speech. "He came across sounding much smarter than I expected. I really came out determined to increase my charitable giving," she said.

Ranette Stormont of Brooklyn thought that the speech "conveyed a positive message of community and charity, in which his political message was out of place." Her friend Tamara Krizek added, "there was a contradiction between his ideals of a bigger and stronger military, and his advocating a smaller government."

Because many of their students were angered by Gingrich's scheduled appearance, Seminary officials arranged for several students to meet with the Speaker face to face before the dinner. Rabbi David Seidenberg, Co-President of the Graduate Student Organization said, "We tried mainly to address issues that we thought impacted on Jewish values, like the relationship between social justice and the Republican welfare agenda. The Republicans address real problems in America, but in a way that makes progress impossible."

Robin Damsky, a JTS graduate student who attended this meeting, felt that the kind of welfare policies advocated by Gingrich and other right-wing congress people used a form of triage to exclude some people from meaningful roles in society. Speaking as a single mother who had benefited from welfare programs, Damsky said, "Leaving anybody out of community is completely un-Jewish. Everybody has a purpose."

As a reporter at the event, I found it particularly disturbing that no one that evening, inside or out, chose to frame their concerns in terms of women's issues. A great deal of the controversy centered around Republican welfare policies, which are particularly baleful to women, but even this discussion did not focus on welfare as a women's issue.

Women are increasingly enrolling in the Seminary's graduate and undergraduate programs, yet there was no women's group protesting against a platform which takes careful and deliberate aim at the gains, like affirmative action and legal abortion, that the women's movement has made in the past 25 years.

–Karen Bekker

Pressing for Peace (and More Women) in Jerusalem

The Sixth International Jewish Media Conference, held in Jerusalem this past winter, gathered together 150 journalists—about one third women—from ver 30 countries. Only in the margins of the program, was possible to notice a slowly spreading national awareness f women's issues reflected in many local projects. In times f war in Israel, women's issues have often been given low riority, especially at conferences like this. It seems the ame may hold true for time of peace.

continued on page 40

In Israel, Naomi Danis and Amir Shaviv, of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. The "Joint" is involved in projects to break through the glass ceiling for women in various sectors, as well as offering entrepreneurial training for single parents (mostly women) among Russian and Ethiopian immigrants.

Diane Lutovich 1955

DATING MIKE EPSTEIN

HIS COUSIN BUTCH, JAKE STEIN, PETE DIAMOND, ALAN FREEMAN AND THE OTHERS

BY DIANE LUTOVICH

Saturday afternoon, February, 1955. In front of the Gateway Restaurant, on State Highway 53, about halfway between Hibbing, Minnesota, and Duluth. My father and I wait for the Greyhound coming from Eveleth. It is bitter cold; that morning the temperature dipped to minus 40. The car is warm. My father and I listen to the radio; Kay Starr sings "Wheel of Fortune." I have my overnight bag packed. In it, my navy silk dress with the white lace around the neck and the navy heels. I'm on my way to make expiation for growing up Jewish in a small mining town in northern Minnesota, on my way to Duluth to go out with Mike Epstein.

"He puts his hand on my breast, tongue in my mouth. He is Jewish, I have no choice."

My Aunt Rose had arranged the date with Mike. She arranges all my dates. She likes to do this—it gives her a reason to call the most prominent families. She sees herself doing a mitzvah. Everyone agrees that unless I go out with Jewish boys when I'm young, I'll never know how to marry one. (In Hibbing there are none my age suitable for practice.) It is thought to be like acquiring language. If you don't learn how to do it during certain critical years, you'll never catch up. I hate Mike Epstein. I hate Jewish boys. I hate leaving my friends for a Saturday night.

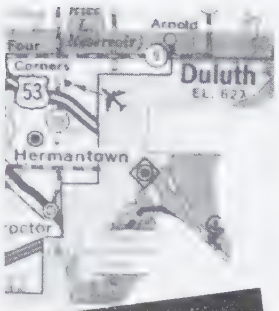
My father has taken me part way as an inducement. I know he is sorry. This is not his idea. It is his part of the

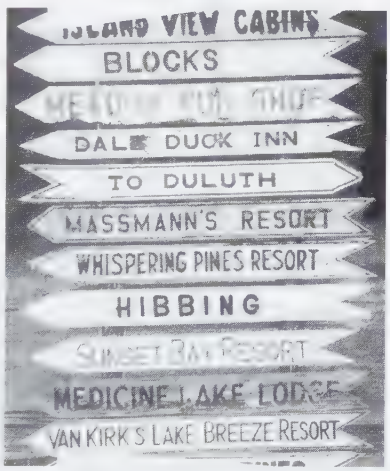
bargain he made with my mother for not moving me to a big city so I could more easily learn how to get a Jewish husband. Every few minutes I jump out into the cold to see if I can spot the bus, since we are not at a scheduled stop. I finally see its lights through dimming day and swirling snow. Flag it down. Hug my father good-bye. As if they were sending me from Karlik to Minsk.

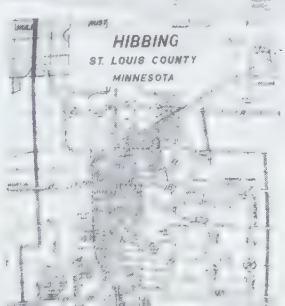
I'm 17, dark curly hair and blue eyes. Smart, too, though that is irrelevant. I am considered a good date for a Jewish boy from Duluth. There's even something exotic about a girl from the "iron range."

Aunt Rose picks me up from the bus depot, takes me to her house on Superior Street. I bathe and put on my navy-silk-dress-and-navy-heels costume (in Hibbing, I'd be wearing familiar clothes—crinolines, cinch belt, white bucks). Mike picks me up, makes small talk with Aunt Rose and Uncle Jack. He is good at small talk. You can tell—unlike Hibbing boys, he has never been in a fight, never fallen down drunk, never stolen anything, never played football. He takes my arm, leading me down the steps to his new Buick. All the Duluth Jewish boys drive new cars. Their immigrant fathers have made it big in "used metal."

Mike takes me to the Flame Restaurant (as had his cousin, Billy, Jake Stein, Pete Diamond, Alan Freeman and all the others). It is where the Duluth Jews, young and old, go on Saturday night. The Flame is on the edge of Lake Superior. On one side of the dining room you can look into the black night, maybe see ore boats loading and unloading. On the other side, you can see a mirrored reflection of the same scene. The room is buzzing. A lot of people make points on the nights I show up. Aunt Rose, for showing her clout and connections, Mike Epstein's parents for having their son show up with a comely Jewish girl, my parents (most everyone knew them—"Be sure to say hello to your dad for me, that Izzy, what a terrific guy").







There is the steak dinner and dancing. I pray they won't start again with the rumba and samba (in Hibbing we go crazy with the polka). The first time I heard this strange rhythm and watched these people bob madly around the dance floor, I was stunned. I had no idea what they were doing. They wouldn't do anything like that in Hibbing. In fact, in Hibbing boys only asked a girl to dance for the last dance—they then got to take her home and kiss her, maybe more (unless she was Jewish).

Mike holds me close when we dance the slow ones. I hate the feel of his fine worsted suit. His clean-nailed hand in mine. I hate dancing. I miss my friends.

Later, on the way back to Aunt Rose's, we park at Park Point overlooking Lake Superior. He puts his hand on my breast, tongue in my mouth. He is Jewish, I have no choice.

I am the bait. I am the bargain. The recompense for a long series of someone else's mistakes—my grandfather ending up in northern Minnesota (tough old bastard); my mother, Iowa village girl not finding a big city boy she wanted to marry; my father for not moving away from Hibbing when I was 13 (he had promised, my mother told me).

The next day, I make the return trip by bus—through Eveleth, Virginia, Chisholm, finally Hibbing. My father picks me up. I call Joanne and Marsha to find out what great parties I missed the night before. Who got drunk and passed out, who started going steady. Did anyone ask about me?

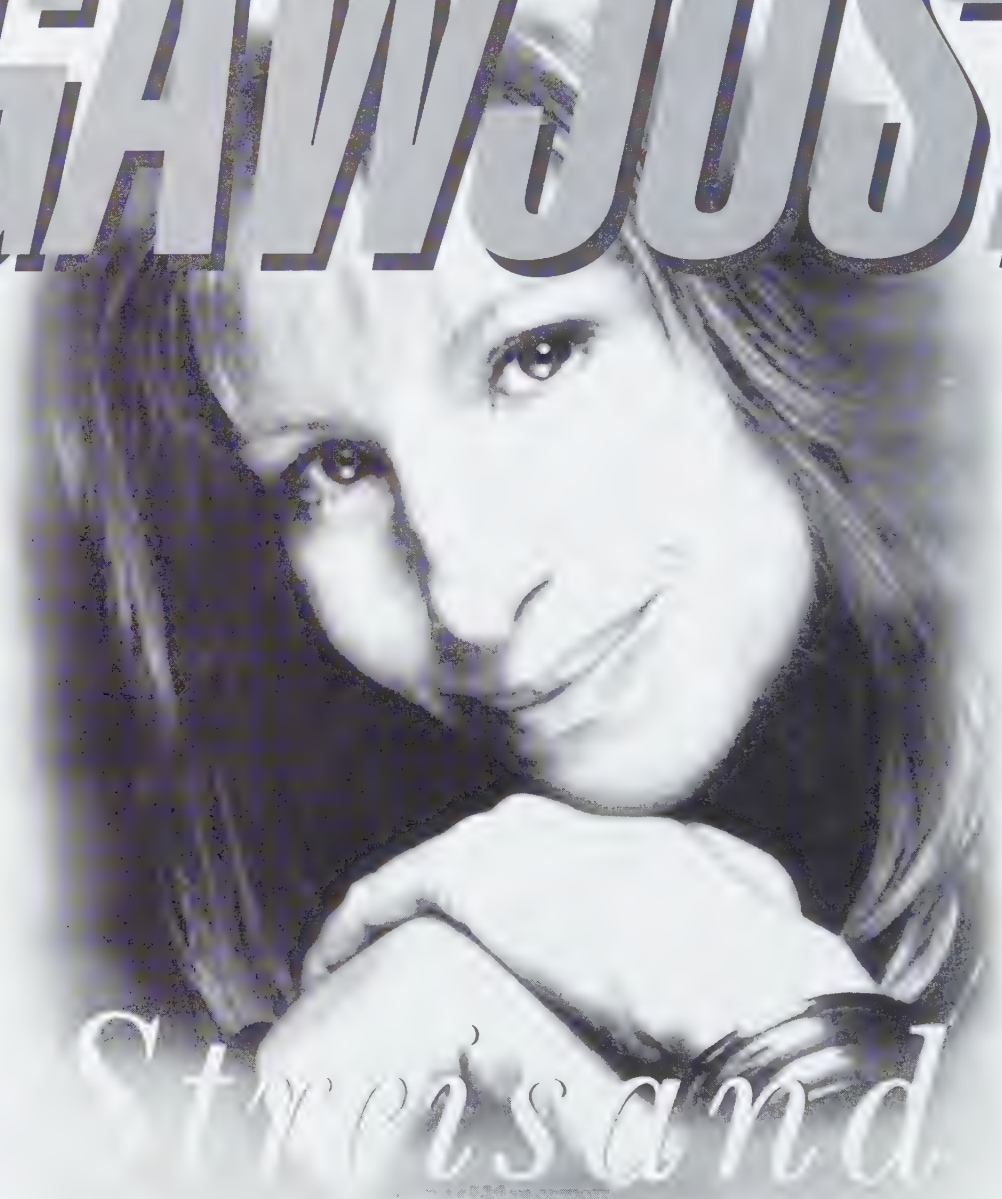
That was my last such trip. Not long after, my father died and my mother got her wish; we moved away. I was back in Duluth last summer, the first time in decades, to bury my mother next to my father in Addas Israel cemetery. We went by the lake—the Flame is gone. □

Diane Lutovich is a poet and a partner in a training and consulting firm. Before having this article printed in LILITH, her claim to fame was dancing at Bob Dylan's bar mitzvah (born and bred in Hibbing, Minnesota).

Marcy Sheiner 1963

"Maybe I could be–like Barbra–

GAWJUS!"



BY MARCY SHEINER

When Barbra Streisand sang, with a meaningful nod, "We grew up together" in the opening number of her HBO recorded concert, my partner turned to me and said, "Everyone in the audience thinks she's singing directly to them."

"Well, they're wrong," I said. "She's singing directly to me."

I felt this with as much certainty in 1996 as I felt it in 1962, when she sang, "I'd like to be not evil/ but a little worldly wise/ to be the kind of girl designed/ to be kissed upon the eyes."

At the time I was 16 and living in a small Long Island town where 90% of my high school's population was Irish or Italian. Normal adolescent insecurity was intensified

every time I looked into a mirror and saw a long, slightly hooked nose above fat lips that seemed to wander all across my face when I spoke. Even my bright blue eyes were no asset compared to the nutmeg pools floating in faces that brought to mind the olive groves of Italy, or hazel eyes surrounded by a riot of cute freckles. In short, not only didn't I fit the fashion magazine beauty standard of the day, I was totally out of sync with my peers. I didn't just think I was hideous—I thought I was a complete oddity. Rarely did I even encounter a face like mine outside of the aged visages of relatives, or in the yellowed photos of ancestors who stood on legs like tree trunks to face the New World with grim determination.

All of this changed when the funny girl with a voice to die for started showing up on television. My mother and aunts, who played Barbra's first album several hundred times daily, declared with authority that I looked exactly like Barbra Streisand. Soon friends and strangers were saying the same. Did I really look like Babs? Well, if context is everything, then I suppose I did: in a landscape devoid of young Jewish girls, Barbra Streisand served as a needed reference point that finally validated my looks.

While references to our resemblance meant that at least I wasn't a total freak, they were certainly not intended as compliments: La Streisand was then universally perceived as a girl whose physical grotesqueness was redeemed only by the beauty of her voice. She capitalized on this image, actively promoting herself as a lovable but ugly kook: perched atop a bench on the Ed Sullivan show wearing a goofy cap, she cracked self-deprecating jokes before opening her wide unwieldy mouth to sing, thereby forcing into stunned silence those who judged her by her looks.

"I'm a bagel on a plate full of onion rolls," she said as her alter ego, Fanny Brice, in *Funny Girl*. Later in the movie she refuses to sing "I am the beautiful reflection of my love's affection" unless she can turn it into farce by stuffing her belly with a pillow. In my young mind,

" I followed Barbra into the restaurant, desperately wanting only one moment to explain that I wasn't just a deranged fan, that we had important matters to discuss, Jewish girl to Jewish girl."

Above, Streisand at 17.
Below, Sheiner at 17.

the experiences of Fanny Brice, Barbra Streisand and myself merged into one and the same story.

It wasn't just the face. I identified with Barbra's roles (strong, ambitious yet vulnerable women) and her songs—particularly declarations of female rebellion like "Never Will I Marry" and "Much More" ("I want much more than keeping house!"). Such feminist statements pre-dated the contemporary women's movement by more than a few years.

Over the course of Barbra's career she's dropped the ugly kook routine and has grown into a beautiful woman. What's more significant, though, is that America has come to perceive her as beautiful. While fashion model images do still reign supreme, it is telling that Barbra came to be seen as what she always insisted, tongue-in-cheek, that she was: *Gawjus*. Just as the bagel, once an ethnic treat enjoyed almost exclusively by Jews, became mainstreamed to the point that every neighborhood now sports a Bagel Nosh or Posh, so too did Barbra and her big nose gradually become accepted. The ugly kook became a swan.

But she was not quite yet a swan in 1972, when I, the quintessential Barbra Streisand fan, had the astounding experience of a chance encounter with her. I was standing outside the Howard Johnson's in Tarrytown, New York, waiting for my ex-husband to deliver the kids after his weekend with them, when Barbra, wearing an honest-to-God leopard skin hat, pranced by with a small boy (Jason) and a couple of burly men. At first I couldn't fully believe it was she; I thought, "That woman looks just like Barbra Streisand." On another level, though, I must have known very well who it was, because I entered what can only be described as a trance. In a dreamlike state I followed the entourage into the restaurant, floated over to my idol, touched her arm and said, in a trembling voice, "*You are....*"

Barbra instantly pulled free of my grip and stomped into the dining room. Still in a semi-coma, I followed, desper-

ately wishing to undo my blunder, wanting only one moment to explain that I wasn't just a deranged fan, that we had important matters to discuss, Jewish girl to Jewish girl. I looked her straight in the eye and blubbered urgently, "I don't wanna bother you, but..." And Barbra, the ugly kook who in those days was still busily transforming her image, placed a hand on one defiant hip, and, enunciating each syllable the way she does when she sings, spat out, "Why don't you just cool it?"

No argument was possible; she had perfected her armor to the peak of impenetrability. Utterly beside myself, I ran outside and phoned my mother, collect. She did not quite believe me at first, but when I finally convinced her that Barbra was indeed sitting inside the HoJo, she urged me to do something, anything. There was nothing I could do, however, short of jumping a waitress and stealing her uniform—which I did briefly consider—so I went home, defeated. To this day I entertain people with this "humorous" anecdote. But the day after its occurrence, I cried for eight hours straight.

So as I watched on TV the beautiful, self-assured woman singing on her first live concert tour in 28 years, I was flooded with emotion. I was reminded of the insecure ugly funny girls we had once been, and the long hard struggle we've endured to break free of that image. I was reminded too of the fierce female rebelliousness we shared, and how we've both managed in our own ways to retain it and use it to our advantage. Of course, the whole world knows about Barbra's voyage...mine, on her coattails, has been, okay I admit it, a bit more private.

I was sorry I hadn't gone to one of the live performances. I'd read the reviews of opening night in Vegas, reviews dripping with sarcasm and disdain for Barbra's self-indulgence, and decided it wasn't worth the hassle or the cost to see her embarrass herself. What I'd forgotten is that the very thing the critics found appalling about Barbra is what I find so redemptive: what they call self-indulgence is also self-revelation.

And self-revelation may ultimately be Barbra Streisand's most enduring legacy. For me, it began with her first revelation: by shoving a Jewish girl's face in front of the cameras she was announcing, beneath all the self-deprecation, *I'm here, I'm a bagel, and you're gonna learn to love me.*

The memory of my chance meeting with Barbra still causes me pain. From a distance she had shared with me her deepest emotions, and her refusal to share even a smidgen of herself up close was a tremendous loss to me. Still, I forgave her then, and I forgive her now; in the long run, the sense of validation she provided for a clumsy Jewish-faced girl outweighs her lack of grace. To paraphrase a line from *Funny Girl*, she made me feel sort of beautiful for a very long time. □

Marcy Sheiner is a fiction writer, poet, journalist and editor. Her poems appear in the new anthology A Loving Testimony: Remembering Loved Ones Lost to AIDS, edited by Leslea Newman. She is editor of Herotica 4, a collection of women's erotica, to be published by New American Library this year. She is currently at work on a collection of essays.

KNOW ANYONE WHO IS GRADUATING? CELEBRATE!

LILITH MAKES THE PERFECT GIFT.

For your favorite high school and college graduates, or confirmation celebrants, give a subscription to LILITH. Use the subscription forms in this issue, and we'll rush a gift card to the graduates of your choice.

LILITH

People, Who Needs Them?

Streisand: Her Life, *by James Spada (Crown Publishers), is a newly published tabloid-style biography of "the girl with the nose." Charmingly melodramatic, the book chronicles Barbra's Jewish roots, her turbulent rise to stardom, and her triumph as a "visionary diva." In addition to laying out lurid details about her troubled childhood, and her many romances, Spada elaborates on Streisand's unwilling status as a role model for her adoring fans:*

The kids who waited every day outside the stage door for a glimpse of Barbra, an autograph, perhaps a picture, felt that she was like them, too. Some of them were homely, some overweight, some homosexual, some just different in one way or another [editor's note: Jewish, perhaps?]. All of them felt like misfits, and Barbra Streisand was the most gloriously successful misfit since James Dean. If she could triumph, capture the spotlight, win fame and wealth, maybe they could too. She became a symbol to them, proof that they were indeed what they felt like inside: not strange but special....

–Sarah Wallis

Loolwa Khazzoom 1986

Coming of Age as

An Iraqi Jew in California

LOOLWA KHAZZOOM

My name is Loolwa Khazzoom. I was born into an Orthodox Jewish family, with an Iraqi father and an American mother.

When I was five, my father taught at Stanford University in Palo Alto. The first priority in my parents' life was giving my sister and me a solid religious education and Jewish identity. Accordingly, we settled in the closest area with a Jewish day school that both my sister and I could attend. Though living in San Francisco gave my father a two-hour commute each day, my parents found the sacrifice worthwhile as a Jewish investment.

My day school, however, was solidly Ashkenazi. My teachers were virulent about equating the word "Jewish" only with traditions that had European roots. I was repeatedly ridiculed on account of my family's Iraqi customs.

"Slowly I began to internalize the Iraqi men's values, to question my self-worth, to live from a place just behind my potential."

"Why do you pray in that book?" a teacher one day asked me, in front of the class.

"It's my tradition," I answered, lowering my eyes, sensing the hostility and feeling both afraid and ashamed. My teacher made a face of complete disgust.

A few weeks later, the rabbi "read" to us from the Bible the following "verse": "It is against Jewish law to pray from a Sephardic prayer book, and it is against Jewish law to pray by yourself." All but one student in the class turned to face me and unanimously said, "Shame, shame, shame on you, Loolwa!"

My parents took me out of the school that day. The rest of my formal education was at public school.

From that day on, my primary Jewish education came from home, spending every Shabbat learning Middle Eastern

prayers, religious songs, holy day traditions and rabbinical teachings. Of course, I continued learning the Ashkenazi traditions by default: Outside of my home, in every "Jewish" synagogue, camp, community organization and community publication, "Jewish" still meant "Ashkenazi." By being an involved Jew, I could not help but learn the Ashkenazi way of life as well.

As a pre-teen, I could sing the Shabbat and weekday evening prayers in the traditional Iraqi tunes; I knew dozens of Iraqi Shabbat and holy day songs by heart, and I could sing a good portion of the Haggadah in the Iraqi melodies—both in Hebrew and Judeo-Arabic (the traditional language of many Middle Eastern Jews).

It was rare for a child my age to know all these prayers. It was even more rare that I could sing with the distinct Iraqi pronunciation of *every word*—something that is difficult even for Iraqi *adults* to maintain. I loved singing the prayers, and realized the grave significance of carrying on a dying tradition. I felt terribly proud that I was able to lead prayers for my family, and I very much wanted to lead them for the synagogue congregation, too.

My father, sister and I went to the only Sephardic synagogue in San Francisco. With rare exceptions, my sister and I were the only children and two of the very few females who ever showed up. Our dedication was so strong that we walked there three times every Shabbat—three miles there and three miles back—on Friday night, Saturday morning, and Saturday afternoon.

"Coming of age as a woman was not an honor but a punishment."

If we were boys, I believe the entire synagogue would have been ecstatic that we were so committed to our heritage. They probably would have encouraged us in every way possible. Because I was a girl, however, I was not allowed to lead any part of the main prayers. After considerable fuss, I was allowed to lead parts of the supplementary prayers, the reason being that those did not "really count."

I remember my pain when, once in a blue moon, a *boy* would come into the synagogue. Even if he knew nothing, if he stumbled and sputtered his way through the prayers, he would be instructed to lead instead of me, and I would be shunted to the side. Once, just as I was climbing the steps to the *bimah* [altar] to lead some prayers, a boy entered the synagogue. One of the congregants came and literally pulled me off the *bimah*. I tried saying something, but the man only grunted at me as if I did not exist, and he joined the others, panting after the boy. Several men shoved a prayer book in the boy's hand, and there was a communal sigh of relief. It was a terrible experience for me.

The message, clearly, was that my unique knowledge of and passion for Iraqi Jewish heritage was irrelevant. The fact that I was bursting with the energy to lead, that in my own mind I was planning to resurrect my heritage some day, was treated as meaningless.

My father kept saying it was not fair the way they treated girls, and he comforted me; yet we kept coming to the synagogue. We had no revolution against the system, and we did not walk out on it. Accordingly, I learned that though this treatment was not fair, it *was* acceptable. And I learned to accept it.

Through the community's treatment of me, I began internalizing learned powerlessness and a lack of self-worth. I began learning to live from a place just behind my potential. I began learning to fear my intelligence, creativity and new ideas, knowing the danger of expressing them. At best, they would fall on deaf ears. At worst, they would be scorned. Was being a girl so horrible a crime as to deserve this punishment?

The day I turned 12 and a half—*bath mouswa* age—I was banished to the women's section. I remember that moment explicitly, one day of my life, one birthday, separating me from active participation in the synagogue, stripping me of what little Jewish freedom I had.

Just as the *bar mouswa* at 13 is a visible ritual rite of passage for a boy, entering him into his *full* place in the Jewish community, so too was the act of being confined to the women's section a physical, visible ritual of a girl's *shrinking* place in the community. Coming of age as a woman is not treated as an honor but as a punishment.

Vocally joining in the prayers was my last shred of connection to the congregation; I sat in the front row of the women's section, hanging as much over the top of the *mehisa* as possible, heartily singing along.

By this time my sister was off at college, so I was almost always the only female at services, my voice the only female heard. One day, the rabbi decided that I was not to sing audibly, for I was violating the law of *kol isha*, forbidding a woman's lone voice from being heard by men.

My father and I left the synagogue that Shabbat, and I spent the next two years going to Ashkenazi synagogues. I neither participated in those services nor cared to, as those traditions meant nothing to me.

When I was 15, I stopped attending services altogether. □

Loolwa Khazzoom is a writer, musician, and freelance Jewish multicultural consultant in Berkeley. She is working on a project of alliance-building and partnership with Ashkenzi, Sephardic, Mizrahi, and Ethiopian Jews. Her forthcoming anthology, Arabic/Iranian, Jewish, and Female, *explores the fusion of sexism, racism and anti-Semitism in the lives of Middle Eastern Jewish women.*

Elana Margolis 1995

Teaching feminism at summer camp

Young Teens Take Back the Night

BY ENID SCHATZ
with Susan Schnur

"If, on the first day of mahaneh *[summer camp], you had asked me to identify myself, I would have called myself a girl. Today I would say I am nothing less than a woman."*
—Elana Margolis, 13

Such a metamorphosis of identity in six short weeks could only occur at a place as committed to gender issues as Camp Galil, a Habonim Dror (labor Zionist) summer camp in Ottsville, Pennsylvania. "It's not a camp," 9 year olds are likely to report, "it's a movement."

Indeed, camp activities at Galil nearly all derive from Habonim Dror ideology, and counselors—most of us 18 to 20 years old (I was ancient at 23!)—are entirely responsible for brainstorming and implementing everything.

The movement has five pillars—Judaism, Zionism, socialism, social justice and self-actualization—which are taken seriously by most campers. "Social justice," I overheard one 14 year old explain to a new camper last summer, "means fixing what's not fair in society, like working for women's equality and gay and lesbian rights. Self-actualization," she continued, "is not just having ideals, but making your actions be caused by them."

Galil is not your run-of-the-mill Jewish summer camp.

Teen Consciousness-Raising

Consciousness-raising around gender issues is an important tenet of Habonim Dror, and at Galil last summer we created several programs committed to just this end. "Women" was the camp-wide theme for one entire week, and we also had a Take Back the Night rally mandatory for all campers (aged eight through fifteen). There were two *Chug Nashim* [women's group] electives as well, one weekly and one daily. Since I had just graduated from Tufts with a Women's Studies minor, I volunteered to lead both the Take Back the Night rally and the *Chugai Nashim.*

It was inspiring to me, in the *Chugai Nashim*, to see young teenagers, who'd had plenty of more lighthearted activities to choose from, elect instead to chew over heavy-duty women's issues hour after hour. In place of their *hofesh* [free time], campers stayed overtime at the *Chug* to continue heated discussions about the feminist songs of Ani DiFranco, Tracy Chapman or Liz Phair, to share incredulousness and outrage about bride prices in India or female circumcision in Egypt, to read passages together from *Our Bodies, Ourselves,* to argue about the nuances of abortion and sexual harassment, and to talk with painful honesty about their own self-esteem struggles in relation to body image and the tyranny of pop media.

At season's end, *Chug Nashim* participants put together a booklet comprised mainly of feminist song lyrics and meditations on their own personal growth. "This summer I have found a new identity which ties me to more than half the world's population in a glowing chain," wrote Sonia Reiter, 14. Jeremy Reiferson, also 14, wrote: "This summer I was ridiculed for being the only male in *Nashim*, but now people see that it will take everyone (of both sexes) working together if gender equality will ever be reached. DON'T BE AFRAID TO MAKE A STAND!"

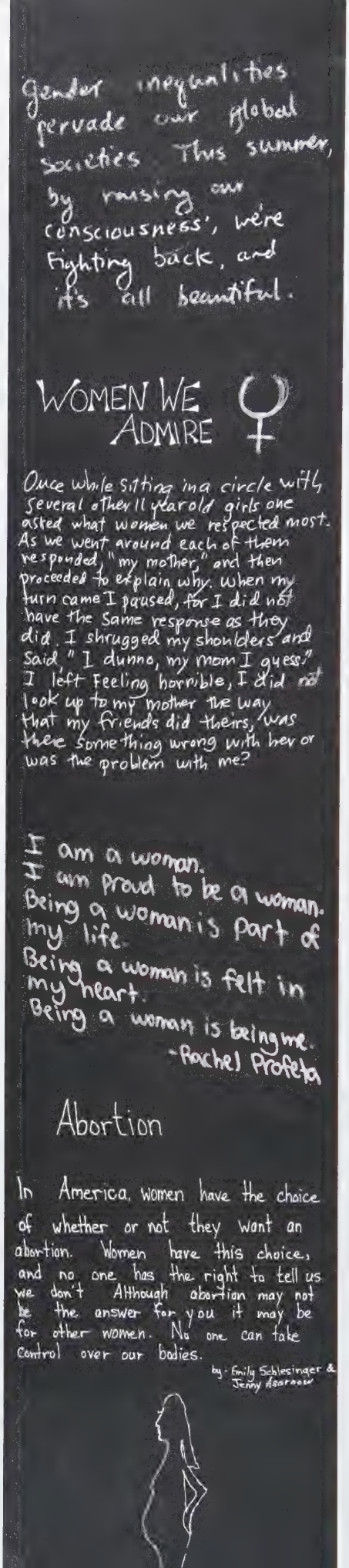
Singing, Chanting, Banging Pots

Compared to planning the curricula for the women's groups, figuring out how to put together a Take Back the Night was terrifying. Our program, a mandatory one for all campers, included pre-teen males who are a hard constituency and had disrupted such events in the past. Our committee (myself and two other counselors) had to remind ourselves both to take these kids' inevitable acting up in stride, as well as to come up with programming that they'd least resist.

What we decided was that the evening needed to start coed, continue with single-sex activities, and end coed. This rhythm worked extremely well, and it additionally let us model for the campers the validity of consciousness-raising in both separatist and integrated forums.

The Take Back the Night activity started with campers in small groups gathered in various cabins. Counselors set a tone of seriousness, and then, talking (and teaching) about sexism, discrimination and other hurts, allowed campers to think about these experiences in their own lives. Campers then anonymously wrote down incidents of such hurts in their own lives (or in the lives of someone near to them). We collected their papers in order to read them at the very end of the evening (around a bonfire), and to symbolize the end of such injustices and pain by throwing all the papers into the fire.

Next, we separated females and males. The female part of the program started with singing feminist songs, like "Testimony" and Ani Difranco's "Gratitude," and reading feminist poetry. Counselors then explained what Take Back the Night rallies are, how on our own various college campuses many of us have marched en masse down streets where we usually, as women, feel unsafe (like on fraternity rows), banging pots, chanting, making noise to show our presence,


Gender inequalities pervade our global societies. This summer, by raising our consciousness, we're fighting back, and it's all beautiful.
WOMEN WE ADMIRE
Once while sitting in a circle with several other 11 year old girls one asked what women we respected most. As we went around each of them responded, "my mother," and then proceeded to explain why. When my turn came I paused, for I did not have the same response as they did. I shrugged my shoulders and said "I dunno, my mom I guess." I left feeling horrible, I did not look up to my mother the way that my friends did theirs, was there something wrong with her or was the problem with me?
I am a woman.
I am proud to be a woman.
Being a woman is part of my life.
Being a woman is felt in my heart.
Being a woman is being me.
-Rachel Profeta
Abortion
In America, women have the choice of whether or not they want an abortion. Women have this choice, and no one has the right to tell us we don't. Although abortion may not be the answer for you it may be for other women. No one can take control over our bodies.
by: Emily Schlesinger & Jenny Asarnow

and then testifying, one speaker after another—telling stories about discrimination, violence, sexual exploitation and harassment.

With the basic goal of encouraging the girls and young women to ask questions, voice their fears, and speak out strongly in a particularly safe and supportive environment, we then role-played a situation in which a woman is harassed on the street. Calling "freeze," we encouraged discussion about different possible reactions to this situation, how individuals in our group have reacted in similar situations, how we wish we had reacted, and how we would ideally like to act in the future.

We talked about the notion of "victim guilt," about how hard it is, sometimes, for females to say the word "No" out loud, and we felt our own strength screaming "No!" together. I was surprised at how empowering this exercise turned out to be for the campers. Hearing their own voices ring out in the still July night was so thrilling that the 8 year olds in particular kept asking to do it again and again.

After more songs and chants (including some Take Back the Night standards like "Women unite! Take back the night!"), we marched towards the bonfire chanting. I think that nearly everyone felt that this part of the program was highly successful—enlightening, responsible, and exciting.

Helping Boys Become Feminists

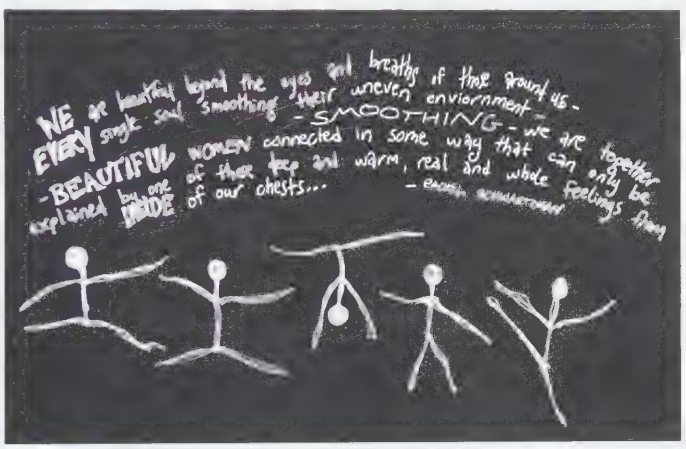
Meanwhile, the boys and young men (age 8 through 15) were divided by age into four groups that rotated through four different activities.

At the first station, campers drew pictures (in retrospect, it would have been easier to use magazine cutouts)—of males, ranging from stoop-shouldered nerds to superhunks; and of females, ranging from babushkas to supermodels—and they discussed

what kind of beauty myths exist for both males and females, how those rules make boys and young men feel, whether campers think they should conform, as males, to these rules, and whether they think they should encourage females to conform to such rules.

The second station was about words—and the pain they can inflict. Asking campers to think about insulting words for Jews and for other sub-groups that they're a part of, counselors helped campers articulate how they themselves have been hurt by name-calling and what that was like. After the campers "got" this side of the equation, the campers next discussed insulting words for females, and how they themselves have, perhaps inadvertently, hurt girls through name-calling.

The third station dealt with the word "No." Going around in a circle, campers described situations in which they had said "No" to something and were proud of that, or had said "Yes" when they wanted to say "No," and the conflicts and feelings these situations aroused. Younger boys talked about "good touch/bad touch," and older teens discussed how positive it might feel, in their own sexual experience, to create an atmosphere that empowered their partners to courageously say "Yes" or "No."



Finally, at the fourth station, campers were asked to talk about the notion of "maleness." Going around the circle twice, campers told stories about what it felt like to be male—challenges, privileges, occasions for pride and for shame.

Overall, the male part of the program was felt to be successful by most everybody, though there were glitches. Some 13-year-old boys simply laughed at the pictures of large-breasted women they and their friends drew, and some 8 year olds felt (during the "maleness" exercise) that they were being blamed for "something," but they didn't know what. By and large, we counselors felt that we had managed to cut down on 12- and 13-year-old boys' acting out (though they still used the opportunity, during the "words" exercise, to call women "bitches" over and over), and that we had succeeded in helping many male campers ask themselves some introspective questions, and begin to understand—for the first time—that they can be a part of girls' and women's empowerment process. This felt significant to us.

The evening ended with a coed bonfire where campers began to express their understanding that there are certain issues that entire communities must face together. The campers read out loud each other's anonymously written notes, and threw them into the fire. Some were more common painful experiences ("I hate it when we play sports and I'm not picked because I'm a girl—even though I'm very good"); some were less common ("When I was young I was touched and I felt bad about it, but now I realize what it was"); and some were fairly scary and heavy ("My cousin was raped and she came home from the hospital and we didn't know how to talk to her. Now I'm sad I didn't just give her a hug").

Back in our respective cabins at the end of the night, many campers and counselors talked on for hours.

Why Don't All Summer Camps Teach Responsible Stuff?

I remain surprised by how few Jewish camps take the opportunity to teach basic justice issues and to do values-clarification work with teens and pre-teens—especially considering it's such a low-budget proposition. Because kids spend 24 hours a day together in an atmosphere that's different from school, summer camp is a gold mine for modeling thoughtful introspection and for teaching about personal and social responsibility.

For myself, creating programming that helped raise consciousness for pre-teens and teens around gender issues was immensely gratifying. When I was a kid, I attended a Jewish summer camp where there was no awareness about these issues. It would have meant a lot to me, as a 10 year old or a 14 year old, to have had a summer with such programming.

I don't fool myself that we transformed campers—but we did create an awareness, and that's a major step. I also feel good that, despite my insecurity about whether I had expertise in the matter, I still jumped in to help make these programs happen.

Perhaps most importantly, the campers' commitment to raising their own consciousness was inspirational to me. As a young feminist myself, I was honored and excited by the active role I was able to play in the lives of young people—as a teacher, leader and role model. □

Enid Schatz is spending the next two years in Israel with Interns for Peace. For her explicit curricula for both teen women's groups and Take Back the Night, send $3 to LILITH at 250 W. 57th St., Suite 2432, NY, NY 10107.

NEWS TO TURN THE WORLD

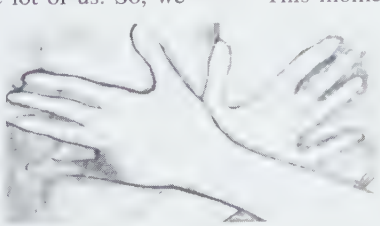
Illegal abortion: That little known commonplace in the world of our immigrant mothers

by Katie Singer

The summer I was fifteen, 1917 it was, our first summer in Cleveland, my mother and I were up to our elbows in hot water, canning. This day must've been late August or September, because we were putting up tomatoes. Bessie and Evelyn, the littlest ones, my sister Mollie had taken to the park to keep out of our way, but Rita and Naomi, they were probably ten and twelve then, they kept coming in with their clothes sopping, soaked like they were fish. I guess one of the neighbors had set out buckets and a hose so they could cool off. Between the canning and all the water the girls brought in, the kitchen was a mess.

It was a big kitchen, bigger than we'd had in New York. We'd had to leave New York because Pa's work had gotten so sporadic. His brother Irving—my uncle—said in Cleveland a tailor could work year-round. Pa didn't like it, leaving his union, but he had to feed the lot of us. So, we packed up and took the train. Evelyn wasn't six months old when we made the trip. She hollered the whole ride.

I wiped a puddle of water from the floor, to keep us from slipping at least. "Maybe this kitchen will never be clean again," I said to Ma.



"*Ya*," she said. And then she turned her round body to my tall one. "Estelle, *ikh hob nayes vos ken iberkern di velt*," she said. [I have news to turn the world upside down.] "*Ikh hob nokh a mol farshvengert.*" [Again I've conceived.]

I turned my face toward her. I had an urge like a rocket running through me to take the tomato I'd just peeled, make like I was a baseball pitcher and smash it on the wall in front of me. Ma'd just scrubbed that wall the week before.

Well. I didn't do it. I don't even know where that tomato went, but my hands, all red they were, went to my hips. I kept my face toward hers, I put my lips together and locked them. And I suppose you'd call the eye I gave her a mean one. I felt an invisible kind of shawl come around my whole body, a wrapper that put me in my own world, sealed off from the rest.

This moment has stuck on me my whole life. Because here's where the world turned for me—from a hard place to an impossible one. By impossible I mean there was no way out for me. I adored my mother. Just from chores she could make me feel good. "Oh Estelle," she'd say, "why don't you cut the salad? When you do it, it tastes the best." Or "Why

don't you dust, *sheyn meydl*? Just give it a swish-swash."

But right then, because she was pregnant, I had to leave the kitchen. I had to get out of the house! Because I couldn't stand to be near her.

I don't have to tell you, do I, what it meant for me that Ma had another pregnancy, a new baby due in March, just before we'd all be getting out of school? Evelyn was two by then, the youngest, just out of night diapers. We also had Abie and Sol, my Uncle Isaac's boys. Ma had taken them in just when we got to Cleveland—their mother had died from tuberculosis. The boys were eight and ten, pretty sweet, sure. But with them we made ten people altogether, and we had only three bedrooms for the lot of us. Well, a new baby meant whatever dreams I had of going on picnics with my friend Pearl Adler I could forget. Also there was a bookkeeping class I wanted to take special. I wanted that so I could get a good job after high school. I wanted to help my parents, and I wanted a little money of my own. My dreams weren't so wild. Oh, I had a crazy one of becoming a doctor or a scientist who'd invent a foolproof method of birth control. Or maybe I could go off with Margaret Sanger and teach women the methods she knew about. Mainly, I guess, I wanted a taste of the world outside of housekeeping—though I didn't have the foggiest notion of what that might be. Bookkeeping, of course, was a lot more practical; and then as now, I was practical.

Well. Two weeks passed from that afternoon where Ma told me she was pregnant again. The whole time, I didn't talk to her. It wasn't a plan or anything, I was just steaming mad, and afraid if I opened my lips to her I'd hear things that'd make the situation worse. So, like always, I got the groceries on my way home from school; I made a dozen chopped liver sandwiches every day and packed them into lunch bags, or maybe a hard-boiled egg salad. I took each rug in the house to the backyard and whipped out the dust. If Ma was nearby, I'd feel that extra layer wrapped around me, fresh. If Pa was near, I lowered my eyes a little. I was mad at him, too, I suppose. I knew what it took to make a baby; I knew what it took not to make one. I didn't see why they couldn't stop doing it. I knew she and Pa had a love marriage. That wasn't hard to see. But couldn't they find other ways to love each other than make babies? These were my useless thoughts.

After I washed the dinner dishes—sometimes I got my sister Mollie to do them without me—I'd walk out the house and around the block, to cool off. Sometimes I'd stop by Pearl's, for company. She knew the gist of what was going on. and even though she probably would've preferred talking, she let us walk in silence. She was a good friend, Pearl.

I still took my moonlight baths, too. That's what I called them. I'd go in the washroom after I was sure every-

one else was asleep. Ma used to call it my private mikve, which of course you don't take until marriage—to encourage your seeds to sprout, after your monthly. Ma used to joke I took so many I'd end up with more children than she'd had; or that once I did marry, I wouldn't have to bother going to the *mikve*, I did enough as a young maid.

That was not my intention.

I turned the light off when I took my baths. I soaked in the quiet as much as the warm water. I soaked in the dark, too, I suppose. I could often see the moon above us from the windows—it was a tiny bathroom, but it had a big window—good for watching the night. They say at Rosh Hodesh, the new moon, the moon draws inside herself, into that dark moment, you can't see it. It's alone. That's how it starts each cycle, bringing itself to a full circle then back to emptiness again.

I don't remember when I started taking these baths. I know we were still in New York; but as soon as I started, I knew I needed them. Going to my own quiet place, so dark it's like nothing, no effort, no name, only peace. I could feel quiet and stillness even with a world war getting started, and I could use that quiet to carry me through the next day.

Anyway, two weeks passed I didn't say a word to Ma. Then one night after my bath, I'd just drained the water and pulled my gown on, someone tapped on the door. I knew it was her. I glanced at the moon, nearly full. I felt my lips tighten. When I opened the door, Ma squeezed in. We just stood there a moment, in the dark. Then she spoke. "I need help, Estelle, tomorrow. So, I ask you. But if you don't want with what I ask you, then please, I want you should say it. Okay?"

I nodded. I had my arms crossed over my chest. I felt like a horrible person, and quite frankly, I didn't care enough about that to make myself different. No: I didn't have an ounce of desire to take my arms down. I didn't want to see, either, that Ma looked like a ghost. Like a leech had sucked all her blood away.

Her eyes had caught onto the moon. So, we had another moment of quiet. I didn't mind. After a while she turned her eyes back to me. "I wonder would you stay home from school tomorrow, watch Bessie and Evelyn, and also make *shabbes*. Mrs. Kaminsky told me, down on Woodland, she knows a man what can make me an abortion. Today I made my mind up, I'll go. Pa, he knows I'm pregnant, but I'll wait 'til my body is healed again to tell him this. Mrs. Kaminsky says she can finish her *shabbes* making by two o'clock, she'll come meet me. So I'll have someone to walk me home."

> "*Es iz tsu shver tsu zayn a froy,*" she said. "It's too difficult to be a woman sometimes."

Everything was already pretty closed in for me, being inside my seal, and that washroom was tiny for one person, let alone two. I felt sick, whirly. I sat on the toilet, more like I melted onto it. I felt like I was the one pregnant. I couldn't tell who's who. I felt like I was the one who'd decided on an abortion. I started to cry. I worried I'd wake the others, but I couldn't control myself. "*Dos moyl ken nisht zogn vos iz oyfn harts, Ma,*" I said finally, after my long cry. "The heart can't tell the mouth what it feels. But I feel bad, no matter what happens with this baby."

Ma put a hand to my head, which brought more tears. So then I sobbed in her belly, with that baby growing in it. "*Es iz tsu shver tsu zayn a froy,*" she said. "It's too difficult to be a woman sometimes."

Ma's face and her eyes were so kind on me, especially with all the moonlight there. I noticed, too, how much sad she had in her. I stopped my crying. I said I'd stay home for her the next day.

Just before Pa got back from the factory, and my sisters and my two cousins were all playing outside or, thank God, taking a nap, Ma walked in. I had a big hot pan of kugl in my hands when she leaned on the door and opened it. When I saw her I didn't dare take my eyes away, even if it meant burning my hands. She looked nearly dead. Maybe, I thought, if I keep my eyes to her, she won't slip away. You know, die on me. She moved heavy like an elephant, maybe I should say the ghost of an elephant.

We got her into bed and decided we could tell the others she'd taken sick with flu. Whatever that so-called doctor did to her, he said the baby wouldn't come out 'til the next day. If we said she had a bad flu, we figured she could have a few days in bed without the others disturbing her.

This time, it was me who said to her, "*Es iz tsu shver tsu zayn a froy.*"

"Ya," she said. She gave me a little smile, moved one arm behind herself, then the other, so I could pull her dress off. She'd gotten so doughy, Ma had, big. When she was pregnant with Bessie, no one had known; and all of us kids were tall, like Pa, though not so lanky. "Estelle," she said, as if to comfort me, "Ruchel's here."

Ruchel—that's the girl Ma miscarried before me, the one she talks to more than anybody. "The whole day," she went on, "Ruchel has talked. '*Vos du vilst*,' she tells me. 'Whatever you choose,' she says, 'I'll keep talking.' She said she knew, either way for me would not be easy. She says this soul I carry can manage, either way.

"Akh. My big scare was that if I put away this baby, Ruchel would stop her talking. And if she stops her talking, I will turn completely *meshuge*. But even when I was up on that man's table, she talked. '*A brokhe oyf dayn kop*,' she says to me, 'a blessing on your head.' And 'this too shall pass;' and 'breathe gently, the world can hold this too.'"

After this Ma fell to sleep. I told the others we'd have *Shabbes* without her. So—I lit the candles that night. I felt like Ruchel was nearby, Ma's angel in heaven. You know I wasn't jealous of her. But sometimes I felt jealous of Ma, that she had someone like that to talk to. Maybe, I thought, this one she killed today, maybe I should talk to that one. Maybe it has words for me. I even wondered should I give it a name, this baby I had wanted to stay in the Other World.

I had these thoughts and then the next thing I had was to make sure Pa could have a little *shabbes* even with his worry about Ma, also to see Bessie got her chicken cut up small enough, and that Abie not take too much kugl or else he'd get sick. He didn't take so good to potatoes.

I never named that baby. But even to this day I think of it, and I think of it as mine, too. □

"Mrs. Kaminsky told me she knows a man what can make me an abortion."

Katie Singer was writer-in-residence at South Boston High School during the 1980s. She now lives in northern New Mexico, where she is at work on Bubbe Loshn: A Novel in the Grandmother Tongue.

Painter and ceramicist Sherry Karver works in the California Bay Area, and exhibits her work nationally. She is represented by the Joy Horwich Gallery in Chicago. Upcoming exhibits: Pence Gallery, Davis, CA; National Jewish Museum, Washington, DC; University of Judaism, Los Angeles, CA.

THIRTEEN ABORTIONS: NOT A NEIGHBORHOOD RECORD

Before early feminists like Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger educated women about birth control, illegal abortion was often the only available method for controlling the size of a family. Abortion helped to preserve the quality of life for existing children when another baby would be an impossible strain on parents' severely limited resources. A few local doctors in various neighborhoods performed abortions for the tenement women, many of whom were Jewish immigrants who had little access to formal sex education or birth control. Abortion was a common—though somewhat stigmatized—fact of life.

Kate Simon, in *Bronx Primitive* (Harper Colophon, 1982), a non-fiction account of immigrant life, praises someone named "Dr. James, a skilled gynecologist as well as a skilled abortionist. The work of the blessed hands of this wonderful *goy*... He dedicated himself to poor immigrant women for whom there was no sex information, no birth-control clinics, nothing but knitting needles, hat pins, lengths of wire, the drinking of noxious mixtures while they sat in scalding baths to prevent the birth of yet another child. He performed thousands of abortions, the fee a dollar or two or nothing, depending on the degree of poverty he met."

Kate Simon's mother herself had 13 abortions, "not a neighborhood record. We knew Dr. James had visited when we found our mothers in bed 'resting,' an odd word, an odd event."

Statistics compiled by Rosalind Petchesky in *Abortion and Women's Choice* (Longman, 1984) reveal that in the 1890s more than two million abortions were performed each year. Petchesky cites a 1920 survey which showed that nearly half of the clients at a Chicago medical clinic—mainly poor Jews on welfare—had had abortions. In the general population of that time period, the vast majority of all interruptions of pregnancy were "voluntary, illegal acts."

Margaret Sanger opened her first birth control clinic in 1916 in a predominantly Jewish and Italian neighborhood in Brooklyn. She distributed informational handbills to families which were printed in English, Italian, and Yiddish in order to be accessible to immigrants.

Sydney Stahl Weinberg, in *World of Our Mothers* (University of North Carolina, 1988), relates that by the mid-1930s, about 20 years after Katie Singer's story takes place, "although some women still resorted to abortion to keep from having children...even most poor Jewish women were by then aware of birth control and used it to keep their families within manageable size."

—Sarah Wallis

Keep abortion safe, legal and accessible! Write! Call! Vote!

There is no *one* Jewish position on abortion. What is clear is that Jewish law and tradition, while varying on when life actually begins, does not say that life begins at conception. Even the strictest Orthodox position holds that in cases when the mother's life is in danger, a pregnancy *must* be terminated. The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Conservative movement's Rabbinical Assembly "does not consider the fetus as an autonomous person," and considers abortion acceptable "if a continuation of pregnancy might cause the mother severe physical or psychological harm." The Reform movement's policy is that abortion should not be restricted by legislation, and the choice to carry or to abort a pregnancy should be available to all women.

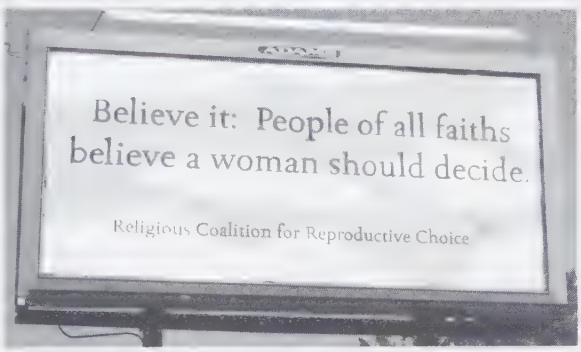
The American Jewish Congress has put forth a position paper stating that

> *In a climate of intensified efforts to inject the government into these most personal decisions, we restate our opposition to any vehicle that would threaten a woman's access to abortion.... The American Jewish Congress...rejects efforts that would deny individual religious liberty to either clergy or lay people who, by virtue of their sincerely held religious beliefs, may differ in interpreting when to attribute 'personhood' to prenatal life....*

The late-term abortion ban currently making its way through Congress could prevent those who follow Orthodox and Conservative Jewish practice from following *halakha* on abortion. This bill would outlaw the dilation and extraction (D&X) procedure used for late-term abortions, often in cases where the mother's life or health are at risk. The version of the bill passed by the Senate provides an exception for cases where the mother's life (not health) is at risk, but the version passed by the House would outlaw this procedure in all cases. (At press time, with Congress in recess, the bill was waiting to go to a reconciliation committee.)

"The anti-choice movement has a new strategy," says Amy Rutkin of the American Affairs Department at Hadassah, which is very active on reproductive rights issues. "Instead of trying to outlaw abortion all together, they're slowly whittling away at access to it. *Two hundred* pieces of anti-choice legislation were introduced in just the last session of Congress." Of those that passed, the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) has filed a suit to block a little-known rider on the highly publicized new telecommunications bill. The rider, signed by President Clinton as part of the larger bill, bans the distribution of information about abortion over the internet.

Jewish women's groups and other religious groups have rallied around the issue of choice, often making it one of their primary focuses.



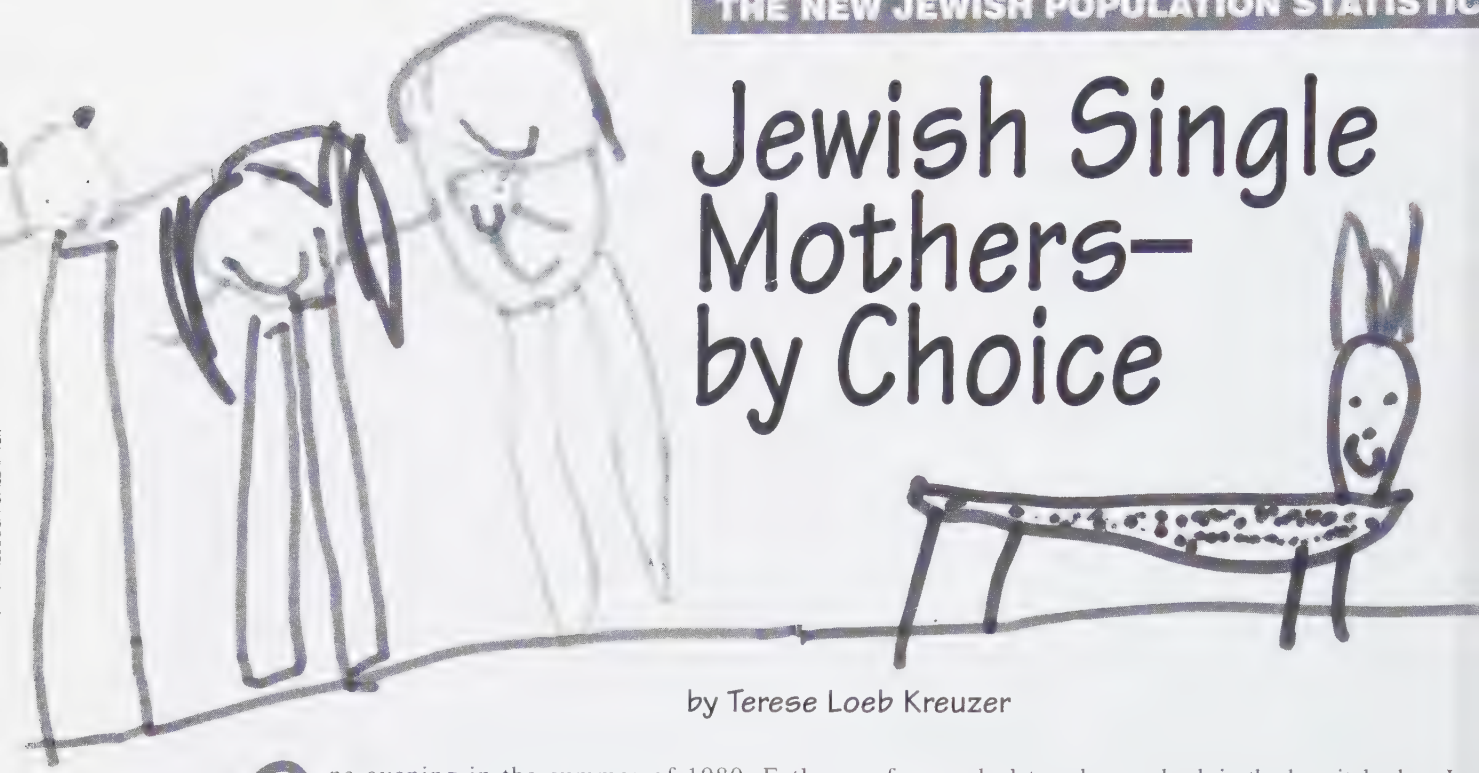
The National Council of Jewish Women (which can be reached at 1(800)829-6259) monitors legislation on reproductive rights, and educates its local chapter members who can then work on their own representatives. NCJW works in coalition with organizations such as Planned Parenthood and NARAL to lobby Congress. Reproductive rights are one of the Council's primary issues (along with separation of church and state). Deena Margolis, Legislative Associate at NCJW, spends most of her efforts working for pro-choice legislation. "When I walk into a legislator's office and say I'm from NCJW, they know who I am and they know there are 90,000 women behind me who vote pro-choice," she says.

Like the National Council of Jewish Women, Hadassah (the world's largest Jewish women's organization) focuses both on lobbying and on educating its members. Besides continuing to send action alerts to local chapters, Hadassah recently brought 200 Board Members, representing a total of 385,000 chapter members, to Capitol Hill to meet with legislators.

The Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (formerly the Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights) includes among its member organizations many Jewish groups, such as the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, the Women of Reform Judaism, and Na'amat USA. Also involved are Christian organizations like the Presbyterian Women's Ministries and Catholics For a Free Choice, which speaks for the 75-85% of this country's 60 million Catholics who agree that decisions about abortion should be left up to individuals. RCRC has been sponsoring a National Billboard campaign to let people know that "People of all faiths believe a woman should decide." The Coalition has also been putting together a program called Bridges for Choice, in which "women of all colors" can discuss what reproductive health means in their communities. This spring, RCRC will be distributing a voter education guide which will cover the whole range of reproductive health issues, what's been happening in Congress lately, and what kind of questions to ask your candidates in upcoming elections. To get an RCRC billboard in your neighborhood, to find out about Bridges for Choice, or to get RCRC's voter education guide, call (202)628-7700. The guide is especially important, because women's votes are going to be crucial in the 1996 elections.

And don't forget to register your opposition to any restrictions on abortion, financial or legal, with the White House. You can call them at (202)456-1111; fax them at (202)456-2461; send an e-mail message to President @WhiteHouse.Gov; or write a good old-fashioned letter to President William J. Clinton, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington, DC 20500. You can also e-mail Hillary Rodham Clinton at First.Lady @WhiteHouse.Gov; or reach your Senators through the Senate switchboard (202) 224-3121 and your Representatives through the Congressional switchboard (202) 225-3121.

—Karen Bekker



Jewish Single Mothers— by Choice

by Terese Loeb Kreuzer

One evening in the summer of 1980, Esther Dellheim*, a 37-year-old writer, unmarried and living in New York City, spent several hours composing a short letter to her parents. She was two months pregnant, she told them, and planning to keep the baby. She heard nothing for several days. Then two letters arrived. She opened her father's first.

"Dear Esther —" he wrote. "This letter is written with much concern and affection. Your decision to have a child seems to me questionable from a social and economic point of view. A fatherless child socially creates problems of recognition and acceptance (especially if the child is a girl). It seems to me unfair to impose such a burden on your unborn child. Then, again, the cost of rearing a child today is a burden which I feel should be carefully evaluated before you make a final decision. Have you considered what you are undertaking in view of the fact that you would be the child's sole source of support?"

Her mother was blunter. She spoke of her "deep distress" and suggested an abortion.

Dellheim was stubborn. She wanted a family and thought this might be her last chance. She loved the baby's father, even though she knew there was no chance that he would marry her. Well educated, resilient and physically strong, somehow she thought she could pull this off.

One night, seven months later, she set off for the hospital. A woman friend stayed with her until she was wheeled to the operating room for an emergency Cesarean section. Within the hour, her daughter, Janet, was born. Less than four weeks later, she was back in the hospital when Jan nearly died in her arms. For the first year of her life, t baby had to be monitored day and night. Somehow, wi no help from family and little support from friends, moth and daughter survived.

"Both of my parents really came to love my daughte Dellheim says. "My father is dead now, but he got a lot pleasure from her in the last years of his life. As for m mother, I think she's probably forgotten that she ev advised me to get an abortion. My parents weren't complet ly wrong about the problems. It has been very difficult f me financially—but worth it. I love being Janet's mother. "

What Dellheim's parents were wrong about, and wh neither they nor she could have imagined, was the extent which their daughter's decision to raise a child alone wou become more common over the next ten to fifteen years— and even, in some parts of the country, commonplace— among middle-class and upper-middle-class Jewish wome

One American child in four is born to an unmarrie mother, single mothers are older and richer than befor according to a 1995 U.S. Census Bureau report, and the pe centage of births is rising significant among affluent, white, well-educate working women.

> "I would rather have been married. But I couldn't find a mate and I wanted a child."

Jewish women are the most highl educated in the country, acquiring th education and embarking on professio al life may pre-empt the decades of the twenties and early thirties. By the time woman realizes that she wishes t become a parent, the pool of eligib partners has diminished, so if she reall wants to become a mother, she may hav to do so alone.

'ho are these mothers ithout partners?

out the same time as Dellheim gave birth, Jane Mattes, unmarried 37-year-old psychotherapist, had been think- about adopting when she found herself pregnant. She d been dating the baby's father, an unmarried man in his 's, for about three years, "and knew he wasn't interested commitment. He said good-bye and good luck." vertheless, she thought that the pregnancy was "a bless- in disguise. My time was running out."

Although Mattes knew no one else who had done what was doing, she decided to go ahead. "I told my mother t I was pregnant after the amnio. She asked me, 'What uld I tell my friends?' I said, 'Tell them the truth.'" ter her initial surprise, her mother was "thrilled," Mattes alls. "She told me that she was afraid that she would ver be a grandmother. My cousins, aunts, and uncles re also very supportive."

That was a good thing, Mattes says in retrospect, because spite her mother's willingness to baby-sit two or three hts a week, she found herself unprepared for mother- od. "Motherhood and the realities of it are kept secret," says, "how difficult it is, how stressful—how you feel en you can't get a good night's sleep, how much of an pact children make on your life."

Mattes wondered whether what she was experiencing s inherent in parenthood, or was caused by her being the e parent. She decided to find out. "When my son was 10 nths old, I put out the word to people I knew that anyone o was a single mother, or considering becoming one, uld come to my house for coffee and cake on a Sunday. ht women showed up. Some were pregnant, some had wborns, and two or three were just thinking about it."

Single Mothers by Choice was born, now an internation- organization with 2000 members, 22 local chapters, a wsletter and a presence on the Internet. In 1994, Mattes blished *Single Mothers by Choice* (Times Books), which s been translated into German and Japanese. She hastens point out, however, that "though the birth rate for single men between 30 and 40 increased over 300 percent in the t 10 years, middle- and upper-middle-class single moth- still represent a minuscule portion of the population."

Mattes speculates that "there used to be a lot of pressure marry, whether you felt it was ideal or not, because there s no other option if you wanted a child. Also, it was diffi- lt to be single in a married people's world. Women are w saying that they're less willing to compromise."

Some women are also earning more, which gives them financial wherewithal to undertake the expensive propo- ion of raising a child alone. According to Mattes, the dian income of the women in Single Mothers by Choice $42,000, higher than the median income for men in the ited States. Most women in the group are white-collar workers and many have professional jobs. Their average age is 35, with more women in their 40's than their 20's. A few of the younger women are hoping to have two children. "Most of these women are well off," says Mattes. "They either have an inheritance or are earning high salaries."

Whether by adoption or birth (20 percent of the women in the organization adopt), Mattes points out that for most becoming a mother is a carefully considered decision. "These days, very few would accidentally go out and get pregnant," she says. Most of the birth mothers conceive through donor insemination or with long-term partners.

Are these women flaunting the "family values" that former vice president Dan Quayle upheld when he excoriated TV's Murphy Brown for her "out-of-wedlock" child? On the contrary, says Mattes. "When asked why they wanted a baby, 99 percent of these women say it was because they wanted a family."

Giving up on the dream of couplehood

Lena Straus*, a single Manhattan psychoanalyst and adoptive parent, believes, like Mattes, that "most single parents enter into motherhood differently. We have to be fully responsible. There has to be a certain clarity." In addition, she says, "You have to work through the loss of what you once dreamed."

Straus, 49, had always assumed that she would marry and have children. But as a baby boomer, she grew up in an era where being married wasn't defined as the most important thing to do. "In my early 40's, I broke up with someone with whom I had a serious relationship," she says. "A month later, I woke up from a dream and sat bolt upright in bed and thinking, 'If your life were the same 10 years from now, what would you regret?' Then, I said out loud, 'Not having a baby.' 'Then you'll adopt one.' The next morning, I woke up feeling wonderful and different. I had a mission. I was incredibly directed.

"Adopting didn't have an impulsive feel to it. In the epiphany of waking up from this dream, four years of struggle—where was I going with my life? what had meaning?— came to an end."

With characteristic energy, Straus found an adoption agency that did not object to single-mother adoptions. She met her child's birth mother and paid some of the expenses of her pregnancy; seven months later, she brought her two-day-old daughter home.

Straus's own father died when she was four. "Knowing the limitations of a single parent household," it had never been her intention to raise a child by herself. "Before I could do it," she says, "I had to be willing to say to the world that I had not been able to accomplish all that I had wanted. At 40, you finally can face the things you are frightened of or didn't do well — because if you could have done

them well, you would have done them. Coming to terms with that allowed me to have what I really wanted."

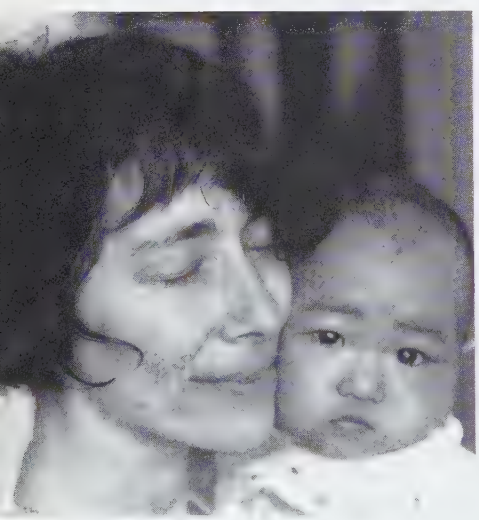
Unlike Dellheim and Mattes, Straus is a religiously observant Jew. When her daughter—who is not biologically Jewish—was two, Straus took her to the mikvah for a Conservative conversion in the presence of three rabbis, and a naming ceremony. Her commitment to Judaism seems to give an added dimension and purpose to being a mother. "It's an incredible experience to raise your child spiritually," she says. "We celebrate every holiday at my house—Simchat Torah, Purim, Hanukkah. I have had a children's seder for two years with 30 people. I was brought up in a very joyous, observant Jewish home. That alone brings joy to my heart, that I can bring that to my daughter.

"I see myself as pivotal and central, I'm not on a bandwagon to say that anyone can become a single mother or that it's easy—only that it's wonderful and possible. I create miracles in my life and I know I can."

"Born from my heart"

Sounding rushed and a little breathless, Miriam Hipsh calls one morning to say that she has only a few minutes to talk because she is taking her 21-month-old daughter to a play group. A few days later, she is still unable to talk because a friend is visiting and the baby is up, but she is expecting a babysitter around 3:30 and maybe she can call back then. When she does, the sounds of a child's voice come through the telephone.

Miriam and her daughter, Dorothy Sofia Wu Qing Hipsh, live in two tiny rooms on Manhattan's Upper West Side, "a deal," she says, that she can hardly afford to give up, and which she describes as looking like "one big playroom." She and Wu Qing sleep in one room but, Miriam says cheerfully, "we're doing fine."



HARLENE HIPSH

Miriam Hipsh and Dorothy Sofia Wu Qing

Hipsh publishes a newspaper written by teenage girls, working at home so that she can be with Wu Qing as much as possible. Nothing, she says, is more important to her than her daughter.

"There were years when I didn't think about having a child," she says. "I thought my life was complete, though now, when I look back, it seems empty. I was working with mentally ill homeless people and writing. I was busy. I had a lot of boyfriends, but the right man never came along."

When she was 45 years old, Hipsch's mother died. Her voice softens and becomes almost teary when she speaks of her. "I loved her a lot. She felt I would be missing something terribly important if I didn't become a mother. She never let up talking to me about it.

"I said kaddish for her," she remembers. "During th process, I really made up my mind that I wanted a child, b I knew I would have to wait until the year of mourning w over before doing something about it. Emotionally, it w enough to deal with the loss of my mother. One day, I w looking at a picture of her when she was around 7, with h sisters and a brother. I knew I wanted to pass it on."

Around that time, Hipsh fell in love and tried to get pre nant, but she knew that the chances were slim. Not lo afterwards, she went through menopause and the relatio ship ended. She attended meetings of Single Mothers Choice, where she met Lena Straus, who, among othe encouraged her in her decision.

Hipsh had traveled to China in 1985. She knew about t Chinese policy that foreign adoptive parents must be at le 35 years old and that the one-child-per-family policy h created a surfeit of unwanted girls. When she decided t adopt, she went to an agency that handles internatio adoptions. Thirteen months later, when Wu Qing was months old, the adoption was completed.

"She's completely my Jewish-Chinese-American gir Hipsh says. "She was born from my heart."

Although there have been problems—"You never ha enough help. That can be tough. Diarrhea at midnig You're always the one that cleans it up"—Hipsh says th "being a mother is more fun and more wonderful tha thought it would be. I didn't know it would be sublime. I really happy with Wu Qing."

Just before her daughter's first birthday, Hipsh to the baby back to Kansas, where she was brought up a where her three sisters still live. Surrounded by fami they went to a mikvah and a synagogue for a conversi and naming ceremony. Hipsh gave Wu Qing the Hebr name "Devorah Sarah."

When asked what it is about Judaism that she wants pass on to her daughter, she says, "Social consciousne The ethics. The holiday traditions and the people. There Jews all over the world of every race and color."

"I don't want to wait for a man to want me"

Beverly Schneider is a woman independent in thought a action. In her twenties she traveled to South America and Egypt by herself. Then she bought a co-op with the mon she was earning as a manager for the Housing Authority the City of Los Angeles. So it was entirely in character wh at 28, she decided to become a single mother. "I wanted take charge of my life," she says. "I fell in love with seve men and would have liked to marry them, but they did want to marry me. It was taxing. Exhausting. I thought tha was unlikely that I would be married anytime soon. I sai myself, 'I am going to pursue what is within my reach

Beverly Schneider and Jessica

being a mother.' A woman's fertile years are limited, and I wanted a child."

Some of Schneider's language echoes in the words of another Los Angeles mother, Deborah Oles, an unmarried Orthodox physician in her for-

s who adopted her son, Yehuda, a year and a half ago. "I rtainly want the companionship of marriage, but I also nt children. I thought I would take control of my life and t put all that power into the hands of men, waiting for one want me. I did what I had to do to have a family."

"Why is it negative for a single woman who has high otivation and resources to have a child and become a par-?" Beverly Schneider asks rhetorically. "If you're wid-ed or divorced and have a child, then you didn't mean it, it's O.K. If you have a child alone or by accident, then it's t O.K. That didn't make sense to me. So I decided, I'm ing to proceed. I'm going to set aside what appear to be norms of society, because they don't make sense."

Although mentally prepared for "a lot of strange looks d judgment," Schneider found that during her pregnancy the result of one of her short-lived relationships—she ot lots of positive feedback, caring and support. People d to me, 'If I hadn't gotten married, I would have done same thing.'"

At first, however, her parents were "disappointed that I ln't wait until I was married. But I realized that *I* had d a few years in which to give up the dream of the per-t romance and family life. *They* didn't have any time to rk through their dreams for me. After their initial reac-n, they were very protective."

Schneider is not an observant Jew. "I thought that having child was very much related to my feelings about being a w. Family life and motherhood are connected to what's portant in Jewish life. For me, being Jewish means a set values and a sense of family."

ooking for Daddy

e family structure is revealed in implicit ways for some omen. One answering machine announces: "Hello. ou've reached Debbi and Rebecca. Please leave a mes-ge." Debbi Gallanter, the mother, is a fund-raiser for the omen's Division of United Jewish Appeal; Judaism plays entral role in her life.

Gallanter explains that, because of intermarriage, of the children in Rebecca's generation in her extended family r six-year-old daughter is the only one being raised as a w. It makes her decision to have a child and to raise her wishly seem even more urgent.

"I could have married a hundred times, but they were non-Jewish guys," she says. "In college, I was interested in ending the war in Viet Nam. I was not interested in getting married. Afterwards, I dated mostly non-Jews."

A close friend of Gallanter's who was married and pregnant with her second child said, "Don't do it!" when she spoke of having a child or adopting. Her friend told her, "It's too hard without a spouse," but Gallanter said, 'The alternative was not acceptable to me. To go through life without a child.' About a year after that, I was pregnant."

Although she considered artificial insemination, she was in "an on-again, off-again relationship" with a Jewish doctor. As she explains it, "I realized that we would probably never get married. I told him that I wanted to have a child. Would he be willing to father the child? At first, he laughed at me. Then, I said, 'I'm 100 percent serious. You wouldn't have any obligation. I wouldn't ask you for any money.'

"Emotionally, I had some difficulty with artificial insemination. I was more comfortable having a face and an understanding of who this person was. When I got pregnant, he got angry. We spoke once or twice during my pregnancy, on my initiation. We spoke once after the baby was born; I had some medical questions to ask him. He was very nice, and gave me all the information, but he basically said, 'I don't want any responsibility. I'm not ready for this.'

"The thing that kills me about this—that really upsets me—is that his parents are Holocaust survivors, and he's an only child. You would think that they would just be aching for this child. I feel bad for them. I don't even know if they're still alive. I also don't understand how someone can dismiss their own child so easily. Why am I beating myself over the head with this? I can't make somebody do what they don't want to do."

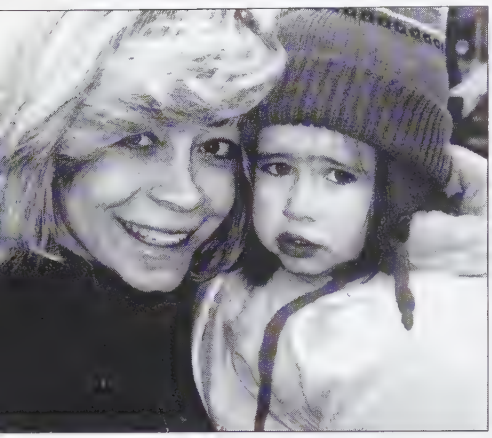
Gallanter's father died when she was 17, and her mother remarried. Gallanter and Rebecca live with her mother and step-father in what she describes as a "Cape Cod house" in New Jersey. They have their own sleeping quarters, but the four of them share meals. Because Gallanter often works late and travels, her mother's willingness to care for Rebecca is both welcome and essential.

Nevertheless, Gallanter can't help wishing that she had a place of her own and regrets the promise that she made to Rebecca's father that she would never come to him for financial assistance. She would like to send her daughter to Jewish day school but can't afford it.

When Gallanter told her colleagues at the UJA that she was pregnant, she got a "wonderful reception. I would have never, ever, ever expected it," she says. "Everybody thought it was the most wonderful thing to do and that I should have done it long ago. I didn't tell the lay leaders in the Women's Division for the longest time—but they turned out to be my biggest supporters.When my daughter was born, the UPS man came every day with packages and gifts and clothes

and toys. It was unbelievable."

As Rebecca gets older, Gallanter finds it increasingly important to know other mothers and children in the same circumstances. Single Mothers by Choice provides both of them with a peer group.



Debbi Gallanter and Rebecca

"Even now, my daughter will say to me, 'Why don't I have a daddy? Why didn't you wait to get married before you had me?'" Gallanter says. "Then I say, 'Nicole doesn't have a daddy. And Alexandra doesn't have a daddy.' And I go through all these other children as part of the explanation—because she continually brings it up. I tell her that her father and I were dating, and that when I had a baby, I wanted to raise the baby and to love the baby, but he was not ready to do that. She kind of accepts that. She says that she wants to go see her father when she gets older. I tell her that when the time comes, I will help her."

"Other women marry just for the package"

Susan Goldberg* describes herself as "the world's longest 'thinker.' I thought about this for five years before I actually did it," she says of her decision to have a child through artificial insemination.

Goldberg, who works as a Jewish educator in Florida, was 41 when her son was born. "I knew that I wanted a child," she says, "and Prince Charming wasn't coming along very fast. But I did not know one person who had done this. I read an article about it in a magazine, and then I traveled to New York to meet Jane Mattes and her colleagues. I was very concerned about what everybody would say. What will they think?

"I can't tell you the number of women who have taken me aside and said, 'I wish I had done what you did,'" she reports. "They are in marriages that are less than satisfactory just so they could have the package. As much as I would love to give my child a dad, I won't make certain compromises. My parents love each other, but my mother has subjugated herself to my father. I wouldn't do that."

Years before Goldberg got pregnant, she told her parents that she was thinking about it. Her father said it was irresponsible. "But," she says, "he made a total turnaround when there was a real child. He supports us emotionally and financially. My mother was always as helpful as could be."

Goldberg is active in her local chapter of Single Mothers by Choice. "We seem to be a club of Jewish women," she says. "There's a greater preponderance than in the general population. I've often thought about wh this is so. In our group, most people are psychologist physicians, attorneys. Once, we had a woman who said sh was a maid—but that was very unusual. There was anoth woman in the group who does odd jobs to support herse My heart goes out to these people. It's very hard for the to make this choice."

A Holocaust survivor daughter anticipates motherhood

Recently when Serene Kleinman had to buy a new car, sh opted for a four-door—easier to get an infant seat in an out. Within months, she expects to get a phone call that w send her on her way to Russia to become a mother.

Kleinman, a 43-year-old computer consultant who liv in a suburb of New York City, says, "I wanted childre and I found myself waiting a long time for Mr. Right show up. In fact," she adds dryly, "Mr. Wrong hasn shown up either."

Much to her surprise, her family and friends have bee very supportive of her decision to adopt. Her mother w probably travel to Russia with her. Her parents, who a Holocaust survivors, live in Brooklyn as does one of h siblings. All have said they will help her in any way th can. One of her sister-in-laws has told her, "If you ne some money, let us know. It will be a gift—not a loan. Y don't buy babies."

Financially, Kleinman would be considerd secure. S owns a townhouse and has a consulting contract that will s her through the next year and a half. Nevertheless, she fe "very apprehensive." Then she adds, "I've been told th pregnant women often feel this way, too. I guess it takes ni months to make a mother, no matter how you do it."

A man she knows questioned her decision to bring up child with only one parent. "Will she be better off with o parent or no parents?" Kleinman retorted. Then she add "And she'll have grandparents, aunts and uncles a cousins. That's more than I had."

Kleinman's parents came from Poland. Her mother w one of ten children, her father, one of four. Her parents, w met in a displaced persons camp, were the only ones in th families to survive the war.

Kleinman plans to give her daughter the Yiddish nam "Zlata Zipporah" after two of her aunts who were kille She is still thinking about her daughter's English name. the moment, she is considering Sarah Nicole. "Nicole is li Nicholas," she says. "It sounds a little Russian to me. M daughter will have to learn about her roots, too."

She is very conscious of being the daughter of Holocau survivors; in her mind, saving a child is connected with t world permitting so many Jewish children to perish. "I wa to save a child who wouldn't get saved otherwise," she say

Theology Dovetails with the Urge to Have a Child

For ten years, Orthodox feminist writer Blu Greenberg, a delegate to the 1995 World Population Conference in Cairo, has been telling her lecture audiences that unmarried Jewish women should be encouraged to find ways to have children, even when no marriage partner is in sight.

"I'm not recommending this as a first choice," she says, "but the community needs to be supportive and understanding of the woman, who should not be punished twice—to go through life without the steady love of the right mate, and then to go through life without having a child.

"For Jewish women, what propels this decision is often both personal and communal. The deeply ingrained desire to have a family is almost a part of your Jewish genetic makeup. I don't know that there is any other religion whose foundation stories are so tied up with family living—they reverberate through the generations into the hearts of individual women. Genesis, for example, is about flawed relationships, but always anchored in family life.

"The Jewish ethic is to have a child, to nurture and raise the next generation. In a certain sense it comes with the belief that part of your job in life is to improve the world, to repair the world. The tasks you can't do in your lifetime you pass on to your children and they to their children—-the theological model and the family model dovetail perfectly."

Greenberg's synthesis explains why Orthodox synagogue Beth Jacob in L.A. was so welcoming when member Deborah Oles, a single physician, adopted her son in 1994. "Clearly," says Oles, herself the daughter of a rabbi, "since it's okay according to halachah* (Jewish law), it's fine from the community's standpoint." Despite the warmth she feels, the contrast between Oles's place in *shul* before and after becoming a parent is striking. She says, "My status has changed tremendously.Normally, I'd be sitting alone on *Shabbos*; now suddenly I have invitations. I now feel much more a part of the community, which is wonderful. But on the other hand, didn't I need to have *Shabbos* meals with people before? Didn't I need people to talk to me after *shul* before I became a mother? I'm the same person.

"I believe in two-parent families, but it hasn't happened for me. I would like it to happen, but I think," Oles continues, "that the 90's teach us, as well as Judaism, actually, that women have to do what they need to do for themselves."

—*Susan Weidman Schneider*

**(Under Jewish law, there is no concept of "bastardy" for a child born to an unwed mother; it's only a* married *woman whose child is fathered by a man not her husband who can give birth to a* mamzer.*)*

riends: the supporting cast

r most of her life, Audrey Leibowitz* has depended on friends for emotional support. Now she plans to do it in. A 43-year-old lesbian and practitioner of psychother- with a Master's Degree in Social Work, she is co-owner a multi-therapist practice in an affluent town in New sey. Next month, she'll begin the process of becoming gnant through artificial insemination.

"I can hardly wait for supporting another life inside of ne," she says. "I want to pass my genes along. We have s one shot here on this planet. This is one of the experi- ces of being here, and I want it."

All of Liebowitz's potential donors have been identified Jewish or have backgrounds that indicate that they might Jewish. "This is really important to me," she says. "I nt someone smart, playful in sports, with some interest in arts."

One of the potential donors mentioned on his fact sheet at his grandparents died in the Holocaust. While bowitz finds this to be a disadvantage because it means t there is less medical background information, she is ry moved at the idea of bearing a child that descends m this family.

When she decided to get pregnant, Liebowitz told her rents right away. "My mother would rather not discuss it," she says. "She doesn't think I'm real wise in trying to do this. She had a hard time parenting. She comes from an era where the man didn't help. She had to work and raise two children. My father is kind of an invalid and is home-bound. He hasn't brought it up. But my brother seems supportive and interested in how I'm going to do it."

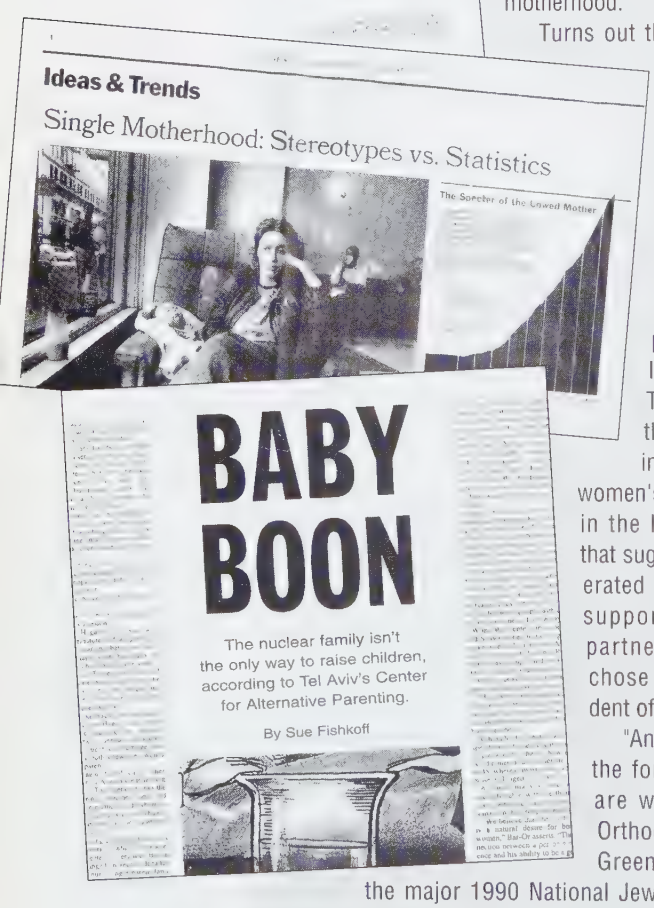
So, as she often has in the past, Liebowitz will turn for most of her emotional support to her circle of friends, which she calls her "family of choice."

"One of my dear friends is willing to hear my complaining when I go through the mood changes that accompany the hormones they shoot you up with to enhance your fertility. And I have six people who want to be in the labor room with me. I don't have blood family up here. In the absence of family, my child will struggle with community."

Liebowitz, who owns a two-family house in a neighborhood that she chose because it is predominantly Jewish, says that she will join a synagogue after her baby is born. "It's only lately that I've had a resurgence of my desire to affiliate," she says. "I've always felt Jewish in my heart but not committed to some of the rituals that I find contradictory and punitive. It's important to me to raise a child with values that match how I live. The historic significance of being a Jew is important to me. That's my driving force for raising my child Jewish—more than my traditional Conservative upbringing."

In Israel, single men, too, yearn to be parents

When The New York Times, the L.A. Times, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Jerusalem Post all published—within weeks of each other this past winter—reports on the rising birth rate among single, white, middle-class, educated women, the numbers simply corroborated what many women in their thirties and forties and fifties had been spotting among their friends and acquaintances. One woman reports that in the past couple of months she has seen a proud great-aunt display an adoption notice sent by an unmarried niece in a distant city, received a birth announcement from a single former colleague, and an invitation to a baby-naming ceremony with no father's name on it. It seems that almost everyone knows an unpartnered woman who has at least considered the option of single motherhood.



BABY BOON
The nuclear family isn't the only way to raise children, according to Tel Aviv's Center for Alternative Parenting.
By Sue Fishkoff

Turns out that this is a worldwide phenomenon and—interestingly—not, as one might have surmised, in depressed economies or among uneducated women. Columbia University social work professor Sheila B. Kamerman points out in a recent letter to The New York Times that the reason for this increase in advanced industrialized countries is women's increased participation in the labor force—a finding that suggests, strongly, that liberated from needing financial support from a husband or partner, women are free to chose motherhood independent of marriage.

"And Jewish women are in the forefront of this, as they are with everything," says Orthodox feminist writer Blu Greenberg. Some data from the major 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, though it has not ben fully analyzed, suggests that perhaps one-quarter of the Jewish households headed by women may be families consisting of a never-married mother who is raising her child alone.

In Israel, where single mothers have long been a familiar component of the social structure, one recent study used as its basis the lives of 3000 "mature, unwed mothers," and a news report claims an increase of 15% each year in the rate of single women between 20 and 30 becoming mothers. The phenomenon is perhaps more common in Israel for several reasons. Aside from the absence in Jewish law of any sanctions against unwed motherhood, the whole country is very child-oriented, so that social stigma actually attaches to those who do not have children rather than (as sometimes seems the case in America) against those who do. Especially in Israel, founded, in a sense, on the ashes of the Holocaust, every Jewish birth is demographically desired, welcome and precious. And the country's many wars have meant that, sadly, young widows raising children alone are a common sight, even as war losses themselves have diminished the number of adult men available for marriage in every generation.

Partly because of Israel's pronounced pro-natalism, we should probably have expected to see sooner or later the news reported in The Jerusalem Post in February that an organization has been set up in Tel Aviv to match unpartnered women with men eager to become fathers—The Center for Alternative Parenting. The intent is not matrimony; all the men are gay. And like most of the Jewish single mothers by choice in the U.S., these unmarried parents are urban professionals. But in Israel the men, like the women, yearn to become parents.

This is definitely *not* an anonymous sperm donation; the organization encourages the pair to bond and to develop a contract for raising and supporting the child. There is apparently no other matching organization like this anywhere in the world, where one of the stated goals is to build a network of supports for the baby that includes extended family members on both sides.

The Jerusalem Post mentions a woman who, after becoming pregnant by artificial insemination through the Center, met and married another man in her ninth month of pregnancy. Acknowledging the odd (but not wholly unexpected) psychological realism in this, Racheli Bar-Or, co-founder of the Center, says simply, "Deciding to have a child opens you to a wide range of emotional possibiltiies." —*S.W.S.*

Terese Loeb Kreutzer and Halley

And the kids...?

Questions often arise about how the children will fare in these unconventional family configurations. In the newsletter of Single Mothers by Choice [September 1994], Jane Mattes mentions a recent study from Nova Scotia indicating that "the educational level of the mother is the most important predictor of the child's future well-being, not whether she is married or single." If this study is correct, it would stand to reason that Jewish women are likely to be good parents, even if they go it alone. New research being conducted by psychologist Ann Wimpfheimer will provide more data on a population that has not yet been well studied. Wimpheimer notes that earlier research on the lives of children in households headed by unpartnered women has looked at mothers who are much younger, much poorer, and with considerably less education and fewer skills than the biological children of these single, middle-class mothers. Wimpfheimer, a PhD candidate, indicates that the children she has studied, aged 2 to 6, show no behavioral or developmental differences from their peers raised in two-parent families. "Especially when the kids are young, if the mother is secure, the children are secure," says Wimpfheimer. "But we don't know when they reach beyond their early teens what their issues will be—especially those conceived through artificial insemination" where the donor is not in a parental relationship with them. Herself widowed 5 years ago and raising two children alone, Wimpfheimer says that her research was motivated in part by a desire to find out about "how attachment issues work themselves out for children raised by only one parent."

But as one of the women interviewed for this article said, "Don't call me a 'Single Mother by Choice.' I didn't *choose* to be a single mother. I would much rather have been married. But I couldn't find a mate and I wanted to be a parent. At least, I have my child." Mattes says that 98 percent of the women in Single Mothers by Choice would agree with this statement. Asked by a talk show to come up with single mothers who didn't wish to be married or have a partner, she said, "I can't. I don't know any."

Terese Loeb Kreutzer's articles have appeared in The New York Times, Newsday, and The Boston Herald. She is also a video producer, a graphic designer, and a single mother.

[*]Some names have been changed to protect the privacy of the people involved.

Celebrate Your Sexuality.
Proudly. Joyously.

At Eve's Garden, an Elegant Sexuality Boutique Created by Women for Women and Their Partners.

Discover a world of earthly delights in our garden of pleasurable things: sexual accessories, books, and video's. Send $3.00 for our 32-page illustrated catalog. (deductible from your first order) or visit in our elegant and supportive space in New York for a free copy.

eve's garden
We grow pleasurable things for women

9 W. 57th St., Ste 420li, New York, NY 10019-2383
212-757-8651 800-848-3837 Fax 212-977-4306

Open Mon. to Sat. Noon 'till 7:00 PM "Confidentiality Guaranteed"

YOUNG JEWISH WOMEN!

IMAGINE...

THE POWER OF WOMEN COMING TOGETHER FROM EVERY CONTINENT TO CLAIM THEIR VOICES AS JEWISH LEADERS.

IMAGINE...

THE IMPACT THESE WOMEN WILL HAVE ON THEIR COMMUNITIES AFTER FOUR WEEKS OF INNOVATIVE LEARNING IN ISRAEL.

IMAGINE...

YOURSELF AS ONE OF THESE WOMEN!

THE WORLD UNION OF JEWISH STUDENTS (WUJS)
PRESENTS THE 5TH ANNUAL

KOL ISHA SEMINAR

FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF YOUNG JEWISH WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

ISRAEL : 30 JUNE - 26 JULY 1996

JOIN JEWISH WOMEN STUDENTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD TO LEARN ABOUT

WOMEN IN JUDAISM, WOMEN IN ISRAEL AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

-CONTACT WUJS KOL ISHA TODAY FOR AN APPLICATION!
WUJS, POB 7914, JERUSALEM, 91077, ISRAEL
TEL: 972-2-610-133 FAX: 972-2-610-741 E-MAIL: WUJS@JER1.CO.IL

"You Don't Have a Daddy, You Have a Donor"

by Julie Greenberg

My daughter was just turning three when she began to ask about a father. Sarah was no dummy; she had noticed for more than a year that other families tend to have one of each—a mommy and a daddy. In spite of my best efforts to normalize our single-parent, lesbian-headed household by pointing out to her all the other single-parent families we knew, I would hear her talking to herself as she played with her blocks, "This is the Mommy block, this is the Daddy block." I took her to the Natural History Museum with her cousin Linden. As they peered into the huge exhibits of American mammals, she explained to Linden, "That's the Daddy gorilla, that's the Mommy gorilla; that's the Daddy elk, that's the Mommy elk. That's the Daddy moose, that's the Mommy moose."

The powerful message of what a family "should" be had sunk in deep even though we live in a building with many single-parent families; we know families with adopted children; families that have two moms. Her own beloved cousin Linden is being raised by a single mom and has a dad "in heaven." When Sarah plays, I resist the impulse to say, "This is the Mommy Bear and here is the Baby Bear who lives just with her mom. Together they make their family."

In her daycare, every single child except Sarah comes from a family with heterosexual parents, and I'm delighted Sarah has no problem fitting in with them. She's mustering her intelligence to cope with the discrepancy between her own experience and the way family is typically depicted in children's books and on TV. There are moments when I wonder how my child will feel about coming from a family with a single lesbian mother—at this stage, she doesn't seem to feel badly about being different or experience it as a deprivation or loss. Despite the fact that the animals at the museum needed to be a Mommy and a Daddy, at home Sarah works to make sense of it. "This is the Mommy and here are the 92 aunts," she narrates, carefully arranging her stuffed animals on the family-room floor. I eavesdrop from the kitchen, chuckling to myself.

When I was 14, my dream was to marry an airplane pilot who would be out of town ninety percent of the time. When he was home, I would welcome him to the hearth, feed him, let him play with the kids and then send him back to the skies. In addition to being almost totally independent as a parent, not to mention well-funded, the children and I would get free air travel to anywhere in the world!

When I came out as a lesbian at age 18, my life-long intention to become a mother didn't waver. My own mother was a free-thinking, politically active liberal. She wasn't thrilled, however, when I told her I was a lesbian—she had just never heard of that as a positive outcome of child-rearing. In her world view, lesbianism belonged on a list with alcoholism, murder, sexual abuse and maybe grand larceny. But, seeing as she had never been conventional in her own life, and seeing that I was happy and healthy, and a lesbian, she re-evaluated her position and reaffirmed her steadfast support of me. We both knew that I intended to have children, and while she was open to the idea, she was not in a position to provide specific guidance about how a single lesbian could get kids.

My father's view was slightly different from my mother's. He worried that I would be hurt somehow, and that it was impossible for a woman to maintain a family without the support of a man. I once asked him what it meant to him to be a man, and he answered, "To provide for the family." It was difficult talking to him about my decision without challenging his identity in our family. My four sisters rallied around me with support and encouragement. I liked to imagine how my future children would have a pack of enthusiastic aunts ready to lavish love and attention on them.

I did know a few lesbian mothers, but they'd had their children from previous heterosexual marriages. By the mid-1980's, when I was ready to start creating a family, there was some information in the women's bookstores and through word of mouth about conceiving children with donated sperm. But there was no established path or etiquette or how-to book for lesbians wanting pregnancy without a man. I found my donor in a most unexpected way. I was talking with my close friend, Tess, about my new plan to become pregnant through alternative insemination. To my utter surprise, this married woman with three children said casually, "You should use my husband's sperm. One thing Jacob is really good at is making babies." I was amazed at her total openness. After establishing that she was really serious, I did ask him. The way I figure it, Tess was my dearest friend, I knew and loved Jacob and he knew and loved me. It made perfect sense to form a family out of this love.

Jacob was honored by my request. It was clear to all three of us that he would only be a sperm donor, not the father to my child, that he would have no legal rights to or responsibilities for my child. He said he was comfortable leaving it to me to decide when to reveal his identity to the child. I remember him asking me if I thought I would tell the child right away, and I said no, probably not until he or she was grown. It never occurred to me that a small child would need to know. If it had, I might have started right then to figure out how to explain these complex ideas about sexual orientation, family and parenthood in terms that would make sense to a preschooler.

One day at the playground, Sarah and I are sitting together on the bouncy rabbits, her three-year-old legs pumping away. "Mom," Sarah says suddenly, "let's get a man."

"Why do we need a man?" I ask.

"So he can be the Daddy."

"Why do we need a Daddy?"

"Cuz you have to have a Mommy and a Daddy."

"But we have a single mom. What would a Daddy do?"

"He could read a newspaper."

Sarah's friends ask questions, too. One day, four-year-old Max says, "Where is your Daddy?"

"I don't have a Daddy, I have a Donor." Sarah explains using the language I had given her in recent discussions about who had fathered her.

"Oh," says Max, pondering this for a minute. "Does he bring you donuts?"

Little children are used to hearing information that they don't fully understand. Most of the world is new to them so why would the concept of Donor Dads be any different from other new concepts like evaporation or checking accounts? But Max's question stays with Sarah. At home later, she asks me, "Where's our Daddy?" I tell her that every family has its own special people, and a wonderful man called a "Donor" helped me make a family. "We

have what is called a 'single-parent family'." I explain, trying to help her make sense of the labels so she will have positive language to use when friends, teachers and strangers in the supermarket ask.

Even while I try to translate this both simple and complicated fact to her about our family, I am strongly aware of how we are scouting new territory together and how unprepared I am for all of her questions. I worry that my answers are inadequate. When she asks, point-blank, what the name of her donor is, I won't be ready to give her an honest answer.

I realize I need to have another talk with Jacob and Tess. This is happening much sooner than I anticipated but it's clear to me that I don't want to withhold information or muddy the situation with a sense of taboo or shame. On the other hand, Jacob and Tess need time to prepare themselves and their own children before I share this information with my daughter. Other people are likely to end up knowing the identity of Sarah's donor—after all, you can't ask a three year old to keep a secret. My mother's advice to me is that my own anxious desire to protect Sarah will be more likely to harm her than the fact that she has a single lesbian mom. She tells me not to worry and reminds me that the important thing is my absolute delight with this marvelous child.

Sarah drops the subject and moves on to other questions about the world. I am both relieved and worried. I want her to feel unencumbered by my own awkwardness and free to ask all the questions she wants to, but I'm aware of becoming hyper-alert when she does bring it up. It is so important to me that the conversation go well. I want the words "lesbian" and "donor" to be a natural part of her world. When she hasn't brought up the subject of donors in a while, I mention it in a casual context. When Jan and her five year old, Jason, are visiting us from out of town and we're at the table, I say, "Hey, kids, guess what? The Moms were talking and we discovered something that you both have in common. You both have Donor Dads." Sarah doesn't say much but I know the information is being stored away.

One day, Sarah calls from the bathroom, "I want to visit our Daddy." At first I answer defensively, "Who was talking about Daddies? Did someone talk about Daddies today?" What a stupid response, I berate myself internally. Deep breath. Try again. "Our Daddy isn't really a part of our lives, ya know. He's a Donor Dad. But if you did visit his house, what would you do there?"

"Does he have toys?" she wants to know.

"Yes, he probably does, but he's not a part of our family. The donor gave me sperm to help me make you for this family."

"Well, is HE real?"

"Yes, he's real, even though you can't see your Donor right now. It's sort of unusual. Some people aren't used to Donor Dads so we have to explain it." She nods and goes to find her gas station game.

The next week, my friend David drops by. Sarah greets him at the door and asks, "Are you my Donor?" The next day, she answers the phone by saying, "Hello, are you my Donor?"

Maybe it would have been simpler using an anonymous donor because I could say, "I don't know," when she asks who her donor is. But I do know and I don't want to lie. Jacob and I meet for lunch and discuss the matter. "We did a good thing and I feel good about it," he says. "There's no reason not to tell Sarah the truth." But he worries about what Sarah might expect from him. "I think we all have to stay very clear about the fact that a Donor is different from a Daddy," I say.

"I can't be a Papa," he says. "when I see you and her a warm glow comes. I love you. I love her. I just don't want to raise expectations."

I reassure him. "If her expectations change once she has this information, it's something she'll have to deal with," I tell him. "My expectations will stay the same: that you continue to be a family friend in a low-key way. You're her Donor. I'm raising Sarah."

One afternoon soon after Tess and Jacob have given me the go-ahead, I gather my precious daughter into my arms and we sit in the rocking chair.

"I want to talk to you about your Donor," I say somewhat out of the blue.

"Oh," she says with interest.

"When I was ready to make a baby, I wanted a wonderful man to help me do it. So I asked a good family friend to be the Donor. It's somebody who is a nice man who wanted to help me make a family. He lives right around the corner from us." I keep filling in details until she guesses his name.

"Jacob! I didn't know that," she says with a pleased look.

"That's why we call Jacob and Tess's family our God-Family. Because you share a birth father and we love each other. That's special."

I hope the information will organically mesh with what she already knows about our world and her place in it, rather than come as a shock. After telling her, there is a feeling of relaxed openness around our house. It's a relief to take the lid off this secret. I watch with pride as Sarah competently translates her unique family situation to the world. Driving in the neighborhood one day with her school friend in the back seat of the car, we pass the building where Sarah's Donor lives. The little friend, who has a divorced mom and dad sharing custody, says, "I know someone who lives in that building."

"So do I," says Sarah. "My Donor lives there."

"What's your Donor?" asks the friend.

"It's sort of like a Dad. Not everyone has one," she explains.

"Oh," says the friend enviously. "You're lucky."

I'm sure Sarah will have strong feelings about our family in her life, some positive and some negative. I am sure she'll know I tried to do right by her. I want to be open to the full range of feelings she might have and make sure she isn't going out of her way to protect me by keeping some of those feelings underground. I remember standing at the kitchen counter and asking, "Do you ever wish we had a Daddy in this family?"

"Yeah," she answered.

It felt strong and healthy that we could put it out there. A kid should have space to wish for a Daddy. And that was okay.

Rabbi Julie Greenberg is the mother of three young children. She directs the Jewish Renewal Life Center in Philadelphia, a training program for Jewish spirituality. This article first appeared in In The Family: A Magazine for Lesbians, Gays, Bi-sexuals, and Their Relations.

REVIEWS

JEWISH WOMEN/JEWISH MEN: THE LEGACY OF PATRIARCHY IN JEWISH LIFE, by Aviva Cantor

[New York: Harper Collins, 1995, $32.50]

Jewish Women/Jewish Men is a sprawling and passionate polemic. With all of Jewish experience from the Bible to contemporary Israeli and American Jewry as the backdrop for her inquiry, Aviva Cantor raises important questions about the ways in which patriarchy within Judaism and Jewish culture has affected both Jewish women and men. She argues that Jewish masculine and feminine roles can best be understood as responses to the powerlessness of Jews, particularly in the Diaspora. She theorizes that, unable to offer protection to their women, Jewish men developed a model of masculinity that disparaged physical prowess, and a model of femininity that encouraged women to be enablers in the service of communal survival.

According to Cantor, assimilation in the modern period has not only eroded traditional beliefs but has also transformed gender roles. This has inevitably led to tensions between Jewish men and women, and to male resistance to female equality as Jewish men have sought to construct a new form of masculinity for themselves.

Cantor does not present a sustained chronological narrative, but instead offers nuggets of information and speculation. She tends toward sweeping generalizations, asserting, for example, that earning a living was gender-neutral in most periods of Jewish history, and that in the East European *shtetl*, women were entirely responsible for supporting the family.

There is simply no historical evidence for these blanket assertions. This book does not distinguish between assimilation and assimilationism, incorporating the former into the latter as a plot foisted on the Jewish masses by the Jewish elite in collaboration with the "ruling class" of western nation-states. Cantor is fond of the tantalizing analogy—for example, between the excommunication of Baruch Spinoza in 17th-century Amsterdam and the distancing of Argentinean Jewish leaders from radicals within their own community.

As a feminist Jewish historian, I was disappointed that Cantor did not avail herself of much of the feminist literature that has been published in the past 15 years. Even recent non-feminist scholarship is not reflected in these pages; her most frequent references are to the now superseded work of long dead scholars like Simon Dubnow, Alexander Marx, Max Margolis and Israel Abrahams.

When she does include some recent scholarship in her bibliography, she tends to ignore its findings when it fails to advance her argument. For example, she does not incorporate David Biale's evidence, presented in *Eros and the Jews*, that Jewish attitudes toward sexuality were far more ambivalent than is generally recognized. Instead, she cites (out of context) precisely the text that Biale uses as his case in point—the medieval *Iggeret Hakodesh*. Similarly, she draws upon Sydney Weinberg's *World of Our Mothers*, but omits her important point that birth order was more important than gender in the access to education of children of immigrants.

A challenge to feminist Jews

Jewish Women/Jewish Men does offer its readers a valuable service, however, in the provocative questions it poses. How has the feminized situation of Jewish men influenced Jewish culture and survival strategies? Cantor suggests that Jewish men, being powerless, incorporated what she calls the "female" virtues of interdependence, cooperation and non-violence into Judaism, creating a "reformed patriarchy." If domestic violence was more contained in Jewish communities than in others where men also felt themselves powerless, as Cantor contends, what were the mechanisms Jews found for achieving relative domestic harmony? (Recent studies suggest, however, that domestic violence was far more widespread historically in Jewish societies than conventional wisdom would have us believe.) Was the kibbutz a "fema institution because of its communal ethos Cantor suggests?

Cantor's focus on the interesting para between Jews and women leads her suggest that anti-Semitism must be s through a gendered lens. It is hig imaginative to assert, as Cantor does, anti-Semitism was a strategy employed Christians for keeping the masses away f the female values of Judaism and that ' Holocaust is an extreme...example of deployment of these strategies to eradi Jews and the female values that inform their communities." Our sensitivity to ger and anti-Semitism is central in understan the anti-Semitism of JAP and Jewish mo jokes and in formulating communal a defamation strategies.

When she turns to the histor experience of women themselves in modern period, Cantor does not credit self-empowerment of women who wor within the constraints of bourgeois soci to expand their influence, largely through women's philanthropic and social wel organizations that they established. Inst she faults these organizations.

Most surprisingly, she seems unwillin acknowledge the accomplishments American Jewish feminism of the generation. A staunch secularist, she f the religious focus of Jewish feminis America to have diverted Jewish wo from addressing the far-reaching change American and Jewish society that considers necessary for the eradicatio patriarchy. While even conservative c mentators of the American Jewish scene h pointed to the powerful impact of femi on American Judaism, Cantor dismisses significance of egalitarianism within Orthodox synagogues and the emergenc the community of hundreds of women ra and cantors. Yet, along with female Ju Studies scholars and lay communal lea women rabbis and cantors provide models for children and a richer diversit perspectives than was ever availabl American Jews. Although Cantor is rig

t out what we still must achieve, that is
eason to downplay the changes that
nists have effected in Jewish life.
Ve need not agree with all of Aviva
tor's assertions, however, to take
usly her challenge to today's Jewish
nists. Jewish feminism, she concludes,
vides the only hope for...a constructive
se correction" that will further the
val of Jews and Judaism in America.

–Paula E. Hyman

---

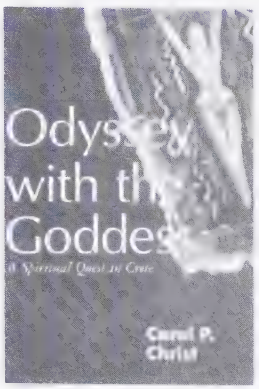
*a E. Hyman, Lucy Moses Professor of
ern Jewish History at Yale University,
e author of numerous articles and
ral books, including* Gender and
milation in Modern Jewish History.

SOLOVEITCHIK HERITAGE: AUGHTER'S MEMOIR,

hulamith Soloveitchik Meiselman
Hoboken, NJ, $25)

graceful family memoir gives an
le look at two distinguished rabbinic
sties joined through the marriage of
author's parents in 1900. The bride:
a Pruzhaner, daughter of Guta and
Ele of Pruzhana, Polish Lithuania, a
climbing, novel-reading, determinedly
ern (yet pious) intellectual. The
m: Reb Moshe Soloveitchik, son of
sha and Reb Chayyim Brisker
cendant of the founder of the
wned Volozhin Yeshiva), an austere,
mpromising, brilliant Talmud scholar.

Meiselman tells her family's
ry up to 1929, when they reluctantly
grated to the United States, where her
er and then her brothers became
red sages of today's centrist Orthodox
ish world. (Her brother Joseph
veitchik, who died in 1994, was so
emed that he is commonly referred to
ly as "the Rav.") Evocative passages
ribe conflicts between mother and
er on bringing secular library books
their home, courageous rabbinic
ns to alleviate the suffering of widows
agunot, and the arrival in the shtetl of
mmunism, with its campaign to
terate the Jewish way of life. This
noir, told with characteristic family
ility and in a female voice, reveals
, over many generations, families
ure their young to be spiritual leaders
eir people. *—Naomi Danis*



GODDESS PILGRIMAGE TO CRETE WITH CAROL CHRIST.
Spring and fall. Feel Her power in holy mountains and sacred caves, walk on ancient stones, nourish your soul with healing images. Transform the way you feel about women, yourself.

Goddess Pilgrimage Tours
1306 Crestview Drive
Blacksburg, VA. 24060
Phone/Fax: 540-951-3070

• WHAT DOES IT ACTUALLY MEAN TO "COME OF AGE" IN JUDAISM? • WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER THE CEREMONY? • ARE THERE SIMILAR RITUALS IN OTHER RELIGIONS? • HOW DOES IT FEEL TO EXPERIENCE A BAR OR BAT MITZVAH? • HOW DO REFORM AND ORTHODOX CEREMONIES DIFFER? • WHY ARE THESE ELABORATE RITUALS RELEVANT TODAY?

The perfect companions for the great adventure

BAR MITZVAH
A Jewish Boy's Coming of Age
By Eric A. Kimmel

★**"Likely to become a classic.** ...A book for every pre-mitzvah boy, but also for anyone who wants to learn about the beliefs, philosophies, and history of the religion." —*School Library Journal* (Starred)

★**"Both clear and enticing."** —*Publishers Weekly* (Starred)

"A gem."—*The Horn Book*

BAT MITZVAH
A Jewish Girl's Coming of Age
By Barbara Diamond Goldin

"This relevant, informative, highly readable companion to Kimmel's *Bar Mitzvah* will enrich school and public library collections."—*Booklist*

***"The* book to read on the subject."**—*School Library Journal*

"A terrific resource....Every girl should have it."—Judith Plaskow, Professor of Religious Studies, Manhattan College

BAR MITZVAH
A Jewish Boy's Coming of Age
BY ERIC A. KIMMEL
BAT MITZVAH
A Jewish Girl's Coming of Age
BY BARBARA DIAMOND GOLDIN

Each: Illus. by Erika Weihs. Glossary. Index. Ages 10 up.

AT YOUR BOOKSTORE NOW

Viking • Children's Favorites Since 1933
A Division of Penguin USA

JEWISH WOMEN; A WORLD OF TRADITION AND CHANGE
by Joan Roth

[Jolen Press 217 East 85 St., Suite 263, New York NY 10021]

There has never been a book like this one. When we look around the room at any gathering we know Jewish women don't all look alike. But *these* faces?

The work of photojournalist Joan Roth is familiar to LILITH readers from a recent cover photo and story on Ethiopian Jewish women, and from her photos of the Jewish women of Eastern Europe, but even the powerful images we've seen before haven't quite prepared us for the intensity and diversity of the faces--and lives--she gives us in this new book.

Roth, who has travelled the world with her camera, brings us into intimate contact with women who are simultaneously sisters to us and strangers—in Ethiopia, Morocco, India, Bukhara—lighting Shabbat candles, getting married, cooking, remniscing. Roth's special magic is that she is able to present these women both as the exotics they sometimes seem to us, and as our familiars—an Indian Jewish bride whose hands look tattooed by the delicate Paisley-like tracery of the henna ceremony; "the best caterer in Bukhara" taking an axe (yes, an axe) to a mass of animal flesh; two women who, miraculously, survived the slaughter at Babi Yar.

A lovely introduction by our own Susan Schnur describes Roth, with her shopping bags of photos, as looking like a bag lady from one of her own photo exhibits. Roth says of herself, "If I was good with wor wouldn't have to take all these photgrap But Roth's talents are not only with Leica. She had to enter worlds often close strangers, especially in North Africa, o alone and at great personal risk, t penetrate the lives of the individual wome whom she introduces us. *Jewish Wome* testimony not only to the photograph skill, but to the empathy of the person be the lens. Roth allows us to perceive differences from the women in her bo even as she gives us the thrill of recogni our common Jewish and female iden Susan Schnur calls this Roth's "cree personalism--an understanding that we ourselves through others, and others thro ourselves." —*Susan Weidman Schne*

Diamond District Yankels, Enchilada Synagogues, Jerusalem's Holy Weirdos: Three New Videos

DEALERS AMONG DEALERS

This fascinating 70-minute documentary about Jews (all male, of course) in the diamond business presents a world that is high stakes and addictive, sentimental and loyal. On a handshake, a chassid walks away with a million dollar bracelet in his pocket. Grandfathers, fathers and sons define this world, and it's touching to watch them

unabashedly love and respect each other, *hondling* all the while. The men profiled have great big personalities; the chassidim study Talmud during lunchtime pizza breaks from diamond polishing; and the gorgeous heiress makes millions auctioning off her rubies at Sotheby's while the little Jewish guys hustle in second-rate hotel rooms, say "ain't" a lot, and get major endorphin rushes. Lots to think about. Available from filmmaker: Gaylen Ross, c/o GR Films,, 155 Henry St., PH-C, Brooklyn, NY 11201. Fax/phone: 718-875-1512.

HOLY MADNESS

"Jerusalem Syndrome" is that phenomenon that routinely afflicts tourists to the Holy City–causing them to "know" that they are Mary, King Solomon, and the angel Gabriel. In this uneven 51-minute documentary, we meet Carlos from Costa Rica who is being detained at Ben Gurion airport (because he believes he's the Messiah); a Finnish psychotic in a Jerusalem mental hospital (who believes he's the Messiah); and many ground-kissers, harp-makers, ecstatic desert-sojourners, and white donkey-riders in between.

Explains a secular interviewee: "People visiting here experience a special religious disorientation. The symbolism is all over, yet it does not touch them inside. This disorients them, and they become the characters that have lived in Jerusalem—Jesus, King David, Samson." *Holy Madness* provokes good discussion, though it doesn't help viewers think about the difference between normative religious nuts and the merely mentally ill. Available from filmmaker: Mira Hamermesh, Sered Films, Ltd., 19 Hamilton Gardens, London, NW8 9PU, U.K. Fax: 44171-289-5532. Phone: 44171-286-3655.

A KISS TO THIS LAND (in YiddisI

inflected Spanish with English subtitles)

A surprisingly beautiful group portrait half a dozen old Jewish men and wom who immigrated to Mexico in the 1920s. this 92-minute documentary, they tell the stories in stages: First the Old Count (Russia, Turkey, Syria, Poland), one by or then their first days in Mexico; their yea shlepping various housewares or shmatt across Mexico as peddlers; getting marri and establishing Jewish communal life Mexico City; becoming middle aged an "successful"; and on into senescence. The aging immigrants are Jewish treasures; la links. Their memories are raw little poem They've acquired wisdom.

Says one octogenarian: "In no way can affirm that I have accomplished somethi sacred or something very special in my li No. I am just an immigrant like any oth who has sought to improve his life. But t mere fact of having had the courage to s farewell to all the traditions, to aband one's family and others in Europe, and come searching for a new life, this puts us a group of people of singular value."

Available from filmmaker: Dani Goldberg, Monte Chimborazo 625-7C Mexico D.F. 11000. Fax: 525-202-531 Phone: 525-520-24855.

—*Susan Schn*

Cheerios *à la Bourguignon*

ABBIS AND VEGETARIANISM: AN EVOLVING TRADITION, y Roberta Kalechovsky

Micah Publications, 225 Humphrey St., Marblehead, MA 01945, $10.00, plus $2.25 for hipping and handling]

This book is a collection of essays by 17 abbis—Reform, Conservative, Recon-tructionist and Orthodox—on the subject f vegetarianism in the framework of the ewish tradition. As the author, Roberta Kalechovsky, notes, "Food is a political ssue today. For Jews it has always been a eligious issue, related to concepts of oliness." Beginning with a discourse on he work of Rabbi Yitzhak HaCohen Kook (1865-1935), a giant among Jewish cholars, the contributors discuss the mpossibility of the co-existence of oliness and meat-eating today.

The contributors come from varying heological backgrounds, and became vegetarian for an assortment of reasons—a concern for human health, for the environment, or for non-human animals—yet, despite differences, certain touchstones appear repeatedly throughout the essays: that vegetarianism, for example, was clearly the diet in the biblical Garden of Eden; meat-eating was permitted only after the Flood, as a moral compromise with a humanity which had become evil. That the laws of kashrut (Jewish dietary laws) act as a reminder of the seriousness of eating animal flesh and animal products, and are a concession to meat eating. That there has always been, in the words of Rabbi Arthur Green, a "pro-vegetarian bias" in Judaism, and "a clear discomfort with the eating of animal flesh." And that, finally, early Jews ate a grain-and-vegetable-based diet, whereas today's Jews in the U.S. eat meat much more often, and, as Rabbi Harold Kushner points out, have lost sight of the distinction between eating a once-living animal and eating a bowl of cereal.

Judaism is a religion rich in blessings, including many to be said before eating certain foods, but there is no blessing for eating meat. The way in which animals designated to be food are treated today is so cruel as not to be consistent with the laws of kashrut. As Rabbi David Brusin eloquently writes, "We are being challenged to rethink what we now label as kosher, Jewishly fit and proper for human beings to eat, given current methods of meat and poultry production. Our physical well-being and our moral sensibilities hang in the balance."

—Marjorie Cramer

Marjorie Cramer is a plastic surgeon and is the president of the National Organization of American Mohalim and Mohalot [ritual circumcizers].

We don't stop at Israel.

We keep going—all around he world with quality nd luxurious yet afford-ble tours. Indeed, people ave been traveling the globe n style with the American ewish Congress for almost 40 years.

Today, we offer tours to 28 countries nd every continent. Beyond Israel, e can take you to both Western and astern ***Europe...Turkey...Morocco...gypt...China...the Orient...South merica...*** and even "down under" to ***ustralia*** and ***New Zealand.*** Plus hany more exciting places. Who ravels with AJCongress? People just like you—from families to singles to seniors. Many people find our trips the perfect way to celebrate Bar/Bat Mitzvahs.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL PROGRAM AJCongress

And over the years, we've learned what travelers like you want from a vacation. The right hotels... the right mix of entertainment and culture... the right places to be -all at the right price.

See the world with the American Jewish Congress. Call **1 800 582-2317, extension 14** today, for our FREE 1996/97 Worldwide Tour Catalogue, or write AJCongress International Travel Program, 15 East 84th Street, New York, NY 10028

See where we can take you.
Call 1-800-582-2317, ext. 14
for your FREE Worldwide Tour catalogue (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
he AJCongress International Travel Program is a membership service of the American Jewish Congress.

Voices of Hope: Echoes of Women's Spirituality

May 15-19, 1996 at the University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada

An interfaith and multi-cultural conference on women's spirituality. International speakers, workshops, arts and crafts marketplace. for program/registration information, please contac UVic Conterence Management, phone (604) 721-8470, fax (604) 721-8774, or e-mail pmcguire@uvaix.uvic.ca.

Blue Hill Recordings is looking for a painting representing love—in the Jewish tradition. Please submit photos to Blue Hill Recordings, P.O. Box 566, Milton, MA 02186, or call (617) 698-9806 for information. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped mailer to insure the return of your photo.

THE CREATIVE EDGE

hand painted silk tallitot for women and men of all ages

Artist Nancy Katz creates beautiful one-of-a-kind ritual objects of finest jacquard silk.

the eye of the needle

Write or call for brochure
Box 11215 ◆ Berkeley, CA 94701
510/843-5280

Wear proudly Jewish feminist clothing!
Purple & black design on
White cotton tee/for girls & women
Short sleeve $18 + $3 postage
Silkscreen print available $36 + $5

She Is A Tree Of Life
All Her Paths Are Peace

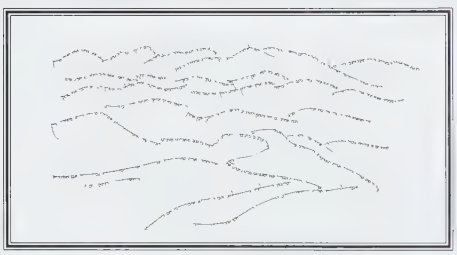
Jackie Olenick ✡ Judaic Artmaking
1117 Lincoln Av, St. Paul MN 55105
(800)484-6901 - Pin #8354
Oy, the mall gives me such a headache...
Browse the Cyberspace Shuk
HTTP://www.cybershuk.com

Olamama CD $1
Olamama Tape $1

The Healing Circle Tape $1
Or Shalom Tape $1
And You Shall Teach Your Children Tape . . $1

$2 postage - $1 for additional item

Hanna Tiferet Siegel
8 Carter St.
Hanover, N.H. 03755
(603) 643-5149



Jerusalem Hills

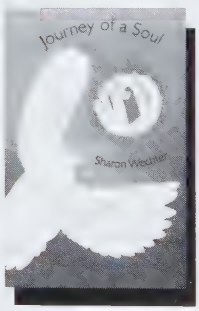
Handcolored micrographic letterpress print. Verses from Psalms that tell of Jerusalem and mountains. Hebrew & English or all Hebrew (shown above), signed and numbered. $200, $225 with mat. Send for free postcard.

Peggy H. Davis Calligraphy
Adamsville Road, Colrain, MA 01340
413-624-3204 email: phd@crocker.com
World Wide Web: http://www.crocker.com/~ganeydn

HEAR THE BLESSING FOR THE MOON AS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD IT BEFORE!

Judi Tal's richly textured voice and contagious enthusiasm for the Israeli and Yiddish songs she loves is difficult to resist. You can hear Judi's *Kiddush HaLevana* (Blessing for the New Moon) on *Path Across the Sky*, available through **GALIT Productions, P.O. Box 21419, Baltimore, MD 21282-1419, (410) 730-0443, Fax: (410) 740-4656.**

Journey of a Soul



Original Judaic Music of Celebration & Healing
Sharon Wechter
performer, composer

Write or call to order:
RR3 Shaker Hts.
Pittsfield, MA 012
(413)443-0175
Cassette $10.00

Journey of Our Soul

Performances & Workshops led by Jewish Educator and Musician, **Sharon Wechter**

Using Music, Art & Midrash
Exploring the Spirit of Judaism

Advertising in LILITH pays!

For rate information call Leslie Margulies at (212) 757-0818

We Are Here

Songs of Remembrance, Hope & Celebration In the Jewish Tradition

...an uplifting, musical tribute to the martyrs and survivors of the Holocaust featuring singer/songwriter Rosalie Gerut and performances by members of the renowned Klezmer Conservatory Band.

To order call 1-800-827-2400.

The Dreidel Comforter
is the* Perfect Gift *for
Jewish Babies *&* Young Children

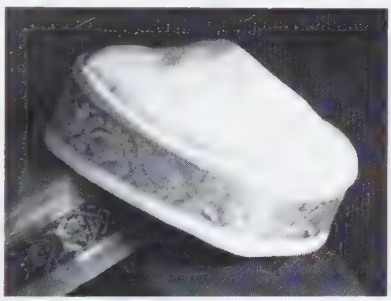
New! Handcrafted traditional patchwork comforter featuring original dreidel design. 100% cotton. Machine washable. Money-Back Guarantee.

Write or call for free color brochure:

Dreidel Comforter
350 Bay St. #100-W
San Francisco, CA 94133
415/436-0823

Glorious Crowns® *Elegant Kippot For Contemporary Jewish Women*

Glorious Crowns have been designed by Sara Harwin in the Bokharan style. Each hat is made of fine European embroidered ribbon on Ultrasuede. Many colors and sizes available.



Glorious Crowns® by

Harwin Studios
9101 SW 15 Ave
Portland, Oregon
97219
(503) 245-8900
(503) 246-7479

The Heirloom Huppah

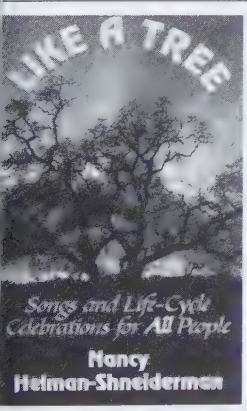
Wedding canopies designed and handquilted by artist

Custom designed models using your favorite colors

A family heirloom and suitable for wall hanging

Various prices

Great wedding gift

For Brochure and color photos send $2
Suzanne R. Neusner
735 Fourteenth Avenue N.E.
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701
813-821-8002

Like a Tree

*Songs and Life-Cycle Celebrations for **All** People*

An original vocal album
Winner 7 awards
The Mid-Atlantic Song Contest
Featuring
"Get Down Moses"
(Fun for everyone at the Seder Table)

"*Tree* echoed my own experience as a Jewish woman, moving me from exhilaration to awe; touching my fundamental humanity. An easy listen!" —*Ellen Umansky*

"Nancy's voice gives wings to the Soul."
—*Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Aleph*

Nancy Helman Shneiderman
3825 Morrison Street, NW
Washington, DC 20015
Cassettes—$15.00 each
Lecture/Concert Inquiries: (202) 363-0208

Pomegraphics

Fine Art Papercuts
Papercut Mezzuzahs
Greeting Cards
Commissions

Judith Hankin
345 Mary Lane
Eugene, Or 97405
541/344-0614

(continued from page 6)

threatened my life, and I had to change my phone number."

By the time Rabbi Lebow held his own press conference on the issue in May, 1994, forty other clergy attended. Like Rabbi Huntting, he found that when he stood up on the issue, most of his congregation supported him, and he was able to influence other leaders as well.

Rabbi Lebow feels that his Judaism and his role as a rabbi play a large role in his activism. "In a post-holocaust world, Jews are called to raise our voices whenever we see the power of the state turned against a particular group. How could I face my ancestors who died 50 years ago if I didn't say anything?"

Over two years and many frustrating County Commissioner's meetings later, the resolution is still on the books. Rabbi Lebow and the Cobb Citizen's Coalition will be gearing up for a fight in the next elections, to try to defeat the commissioners responsible at the polls. *–Karen Bekker*

(continued from page 7)

Not a single formal program addressed women's issues specifically, and women were rare (5 of 40) among those who addressed the plenary. They were Shulamit Aloni, Minister of Communications, Science and the Arts; Wafa Amar, a Jordanian correspondent for Reuters based in Israel; Nadine Baudot-Trajtenberg, an economist with Israel's Bank Hapoalim; Ruth Lapidot professor of law at the Hebrew University; and Amira Hess, Gaza correspondent for the daily newspaper Haaretz. Hess, with an academic background in history and the Holocaust, spoke of her reporting as "journalism from the other side." "I am in a permanent discovery of the (Palestinian) society whose direction of development was determined by my own society," she noted.

In informal but scheduled encounters, such as coffee discussions with representatives of Peace Now and the Judea and Samaria Settlers Movements, women were more numerous. The best chance learning about women's issues came on visits. Israel Film Archive curator A Kronish commented wryly on the g between the images of Jewish wome film and the reality. Melila Helner ho journalists at Elul, a unique Jerusalem *midrash* where secular and religious J female and male study texts together the Jerusalem College of Technol several touring press people—men as as women—were disturbed by an imp sive video showing how the coll founded in 1969, integrates new im grants and gives them the technical skil earn a living plus a background in Ju studies. The problem? The college admits male students!

In other exchanges, both Chief R Yisrael Meir Lau, and Jerusalem M Ehud Olmert, asked how to resolve the unanswered 1989 petition of the "Wo of the Wall" to read from a Torah a holy site, declined to give opinions made reference to vague "committees

ADVERTISEMENT

Grants available for Jewish Feminist Curricula!

The Shefa Fund, a public foundation promoting *tikkun olam*, is offering funding for curriculum projects that integrate feminist perspectives into Jewish educational programs for elementary and high school-aged students. The Shefa Fund is seeking proposals for the development and distribution of innovative curricula that integrate the experiences and contributions of Jewish women and feminist scholarship into all areas of Jewish study–including Bible, history, ethics, life cycle, ritual, theology, and contemporary issues. For information and a grant application, write to The Shefa Fund, 7318 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19119 or fax (215) 247-9703, or reach us by e-mail at shefafnd@libertynet.org.

The deadline for submission of proposals is May 1, 1996.

Great Jewish Stories

Our acclaimed National Public Radio series is now available on cassette tape.

31 short stories by Sholem Aleichem, Isaac Babel, S.Y. Agnon, Isaac Bashevis Singer, I.L. Peretz, Grace Paley, Philip Roth and many others.

Read by 26 of the finest actors of stage and screen, including Alan Alda, Lauren Bacall, Claire Bloom, Jeff Goldblum, Elliott Gould, Walter Matthau, and Rhea Perlman.

Hosted by Leonard Nimoy. Music by Hankus Netsky. Directed by Joan Micklin Silver

Our beautifully designed cassette album includes the full 13 hours on 9 cassette tapes. $80.00, plus $5.00 shipping.

National Yiddish Book Center
1-800-524-2727

ers. Panelist Rabbi David Rosen, ector of the Interfaith Relations for the -Defamation League, was more blunt. remarked in an informal conversation it is indeed "a moral outrage" that nen should be denied this right, but that is difficult to bring a large diverse ulation such as Jerusalem's into the ern way of thinking."

—Naomi Danis

Kibbutz for the Summer
No Passport Needed

Habonim Dror Camp Moshava

Bel Air, Maryland

- Boys & Girls entering grades 4-10
- Israel program 11th grade, 12th grade, Jr. Counselor
- Kibbutz/Zionist atmosphere
- Specialists from Israel
- Israeli Culture, Singing, Dance
- Arts and Crafts, Nature
- Swimming–2 pools, Boating on lake
- Sports–basketball, baseball, etc.
- Scouting program–Tzofiut
- Overnights and outings, campfires
- Kashrut observed
- Sabbath observance
- Non-competitive
- Judaic program
- Daily Hebrew instruction taught informally

ACCREDITED CAMP ACA American Camping Association

For information call (800) 454-2205

SEE THE JEWISH.COMMUNITY ONLINE!

Try America Online FREE

If you own a computer and a modem, we invite you to try the nation's most exciting online service, America Online®, FREE.

- See the **Lilith Magazine** in the newsstand.
- The Jewish Forum is filled with bulletin boards, chats, downloads and lots of Jewish content.
- Navigate the Internet with ease through the Internet Connection.
- Plus, unlimited e-mail, news updates, financial information, and live nationwide access to an electronic community.

We'll send you the software and give you 10 FREE hours to try America Online—risk-free. Simply call 1-800-729-4499 or mail coupon below.

DETACH & MAIL TODAY!

AMERICA Online

Yes! I'd like to see the Jewish Community Online and try America Online —FREE. Send me the free software and trial membership. I understand there's no risk—if I'm not completely satisfied, I may cancel without further obligation.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

SELECT DISK TYPE AND SIZE

Windows*: ❑ 3.5 Apple: ❑ Macintosh® Other: _____

*To use America Online for Windows, you must have a 386 PC or higher, 4MB of RAM., a VGA (256 color support recommended) monitor, a mouse, a modem, and a working copy of Windows 3.1 Use of America Online requires a major credit card or checking account. Limit one free trial per household. America Online is a registered service mark of America Online, Inc. Other names are service marks or trademarks of their respective owners.

Mail To: Jewish Community Online, 225 Bush St. #1480, San Francisco, CA 94104

Put your old mailing label here, complete form below and mail to LILITH, Dept. LIL, P.O. Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834

New Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

MOVING?

The post office will not forward magazines like LILITH, sent by third-class mail. To make sure you don't miss an issue, please send us your label and your new address.

Healing

An AIDS information hotline gives information and assistance in Yiddish, Hebrew or English with a sensitivity to Jewish concerns, as well as referrals to knowledgeable Orthodox, Conservative or Reform rabbis. All calls are strictly confidential. These services are provided by a foundation founded by the sister of a courageous young man from an Orthodox Jewish family who died of AIDS, and is named in his memory. The foundation's goal is to inspire compassionate understanding in the Jewish community and to help alleviate the shame, silence and isolation that Jews with AIDS and their loved ones continue to feel, and to prevent the spread of AIDS through education. You can become involved: Invite a speaker to your Jewish high school or synagogue. Participate in *bikur cholim* , visiting persons with AIDS. Request a contribution box to bring to your synagogue, school or kosher butcher shop to collect funds. *Tzvi Aryeh AIDS Foundation, P.O. Box 150, New York, NY 10025; (212)866-6306.*

Responsible for elderly relatives? The Elder Support Network will put you in touch with the Jewish family service agency located nearest to your relative (even if you are in Israel and they are in North America, or vice versa). Professionals from that agency will help you prepare a care plan that might include such services as home-delivered meals, home aides, electric emergency monitoring systems and transportation. Reasonable rates include the possibliity of a sliding fee scale. Call *Association of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies at 800-634-7346; fax 908-821-0493; e-mail AJFCA@aol.com*

Child Abuse Alert. A booklet originally distributed following the 1987 beating death of Lisa Steinberg is now being reissued in response to the question: how might Elisa Izquierdo's life have been saved? The free desk reference, written by Jewish Child Care Association social workers, describes signs— shown by children and abusi adults—that suggest a child being maltreated or neglecte Obtain a free copy from *JCC 575 Lexington Ave., New Yo NY 10022; (212)371-1313 .*

Long Distance Love is a no profit organization that conn people who have the same illness so they can communi for mutual support. Participa are matched based on criteri such as age, health problems symptoms, personal background, attitude, hobbie and interests. Family membe friends and caretakers can b connected as well via a Fam Network. *Long Distance Lo Support Network, P.O. Box 114, New Brunswick, NJ; (908)418-1811.*

EXHIBITS

Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities explores the effect of the resurgence of ethnic consciousness over the past decade on Jewish artists. The exhibition has three sections: Re-Considering Ethnicity; Re-Presenting Popular Culture; and Re-Inventing Ritual. The works, while diverse in style, share an obsessive, confrontational and humorous approach to how we represent identity. Artists include: Helen Aylon, Deborah Kass, Cary Leibowitz and Rhonda Lieberman, Beverly Naidus, Nurit Newman, Rona Pondick, Elaine Reichek, Ilene Segalove and Hannah Wilke, Sandi Dubowski, and Susan Mogul. Through July 14, 1996 at the *Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. NY, NY 10128, (212)423-3200.*

COURTESY THE JEWISH MUSEUM

Cary Leibowitz and Rhonda Lieberman, "Chanel Hannukah,"1991

Passages: Jewish Women's Immigration and Family History, a painting and mixed media installation exhibit, can be seen at the Ellis Island Immigration Museum through April 21, 1996. Each of six artists—Beth Grossman (curator), Carol Hamoy, Adrienne Klein, Rhoda London, Gerda Meyer-Bernstein and Franciska Rosenthal Louw—was invited to create work specifically designed for the dormitory rooms which housed immigrants during processing. Their works, the first site-specific exhibition at the museum, evoke issues of dislocation and tradition, hope and loss, politics and religion. *Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Special Exhibits Gallery, Liberty Island, New York, NY; (212)363-5803.*

Beth Grossman's "Passages," depicts Bella, the artist's grandmother, leaving Russia alone

GO AND LEARN

Yiddish: Beyond Oy Vey: Learn the fundamentals of Yiddish grammar; read Yiddish literary classics; explore East European and American Jewish culture through lectures (in Yiddish and English), Yiddish films, Yiddish conversation groups and a variety of workshops on translation, theater, folksong and traditional dance. Out-of-towners may stay in single rooms in a Yiddish dormitory suite on campus of Columbia University which co-sponsors this program for elementary intermediate and advanced-level students. June 24 to August 2. For an application contact *Jeffrey Salant, Director of Yiddish Language Programs YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 555 W. 57th St., #1100, New York, NY 10019; (212) 246-6080; fax (212)292-1892.*

The Alisa Flatow Memorial Scholarship Fund to encourage post-high school studies of Judaism in Israel has been established in memory of the 20-year-old American student who was killed on April 9, 1995 in a terrorist attack in Kfar Darom, Gaza, Israel. Applicants may be planning to study at a yeshiva or a university; preference will be given to individuals who demonstrate academic promise and a critical need for financial aid in order to pursue study in Israel. Contributions may also be sent to augment this fund, which was established by the Flatow family. Contact *Dr. Wallace Green, Alisa Flatow Memorial Scholarship Fund, Jewish Community Foundation of MetroWest, 901 Route 10 East, Whippany NJ 07981; (201)428-7400.*

Immerse yourself in the study of Jewish culture in a year long program of courses at Hampshire College, (with the possibility of taking courses as well as at other area colleges), while participating in a unique work-study program at the National Yiddish Book center. Jeremiah Kaplan Fellowships will fund undergraduate student scholars, paying 70% of each student's tuition for a year. Applications from those with sophomore or higher status must be received by March 1 to begin studying the following fall term. *Hampshire College, Office of Admissions, Amherst MA 01002; (413)582-5471.*

Cracow: The Modern History and Experience of Jews in Eastern Europe, a summer course, explores the multifaceted community life, economic and political experiences, culture, literature, folklore, as well as the tragedy of the Holocaust. Student stipends are available for this eight-credit five-week program with funding from Steven Spielberg's Righteous Persons Foundation. Open to all students. Application deadline is May 1. Contact *NYU in Cracow, New York University, 285 Mercer St., 2nd fl., New York, NY 10003; (212)998-8175; fax (212)995-4177; e-mail abroad@nyu.edu*

Speak Ladino? A doctoral candidate in medieval Spanish literature is working on a project to preserve the Judeo-Spanish language by recording the memories and experiences of Sephardi Jews who speak Ladino. Contact *Susan Brody, 159 Fields Ave., Staten Island, NY 10314.*

olocaust

ou have a grandparent survived the Holocaust? you interested in ecting with others of the rd Generation" to share thoughts, feelings, and swered questions about g raised by parents who selves were raised by caust survivors? Write to hologist and mediator Eva rown, project director of generational Healing of caust Families, herself a l survivor of the Holocaust a grandparent. *Eva Metzger vn , 541 Station Rd., erst, MA 01002; e-mail: nbrown@psych.umass.edu*

e you written a book or an cle or produced a film on experience of a child ivor of the Holocaust? To your work included in a ography and videography g compiled, send a ription and pertinent iled information to: *Ann ore, The Hidden Child ndation, Anti-Defamation gue, 823 UN Plaza, New , NY 10017; (212)490-5.*

Train to Lead

The Bibliodrama Training Institute is a 6-day intensive residential program to train Jewish professionals and laity in the use of role-playing techniques to create contemporary *midrash*. In this method—developed by training director Peter Pitzele, author of *Our Fathers' Wells* (HarperSanFranciso, 1995)—participants step into the roles of biblical characters, imagining their motivations and relationships, struggles and dreams. Also on the faculty is Alicia Ostriker, LILITH's poetry editor, and author of *The Nakedness of the Fathers: Biblical Visions and Revisions* (Rutgers University Press, 1995). At Elat Chayyim retreat Center in Accord, NY, June 24-30. Contact *Rivkah Walton, Bibiliodrama Training Institute, 441 W. Carpenter Ln., Philadelphia, PA 19119-3006; (215)438-6108.*

A Jewish Outdoor Leaders a training course in backpacking, rock site managment, Jewish wilderness living, and environmental ethics and education will be held May 20-June 10 in the Blue Ridge Mountains at the North Carolina Outward Bound. Sponsored by the Coalition for the Environment in Jewish Life, an affiliate of the National Religious Partnership for the Environment. Contact *Michal Smart, COEJL Director of Education, 39 Wyatt St. Somerville, MA 02143. e-mail: michsmart @aol.com* or for this course, *Rob Shulman, (617)457-8747; e-mail wk09539@worldlink.com*

Spirit of '73: Rock for Choice is a theme album commemorating the Roe v. Wade decision. Produced by Julie Hermelin and Joy Ray, the compilation offers a wide variety of musical styles, featuring 14 new tracks by women performers, including the acoustic Indigo Girls, rockers Babe in Toyland, and jazz's Cassandra Wilson, as well as songs from women singers and songwriters in the 1970's. Profits benefit Rock for Choice, a project of the Feminist Majority Fund. Distributed to music stores by *550 Music/ Epic/Sony (BK66879)*

The 4th Annual Take Our Daughters to Work Day will be April 25. This year scholarships of $20,000 in savings bonds will be awarded by raffle to 3 girls, and $1500 will go to the girls athletic program in each winner's school. Deadline May 31,1996. Girls. aged 9-17, may send a SASE for an entry form to *Ms. Foundation for Women, TODTW Sweepstakes Entry, P.O.B. 397, Camden, NC 27921; (800)676-7780.*

The New Girl Times, a national newspaper written by girls with news that's meant to empower, includes in its inaugural issue columns on computers, "zines," drinking, AIDS, adoption, being a vegetarian, animals, the Youth Tent at the NGO Forum on Women in China, and the spending power of teenage girls. Subscriptions are $12 for one year from *The New Girl Times, 215 W. 84th St., New York, NY 10024; (212)595-7525;(800)560-7525; e-mail: nugrltim@echonyc.com*

—compiled by Naomi Danis

Rosh Hodesh

more has gone on
in her house
than she wants
you to know.
It's a night you
don't need
a fire. The
new moon high
lights details,
the unwashed silk,
the slip she
steps out of,
the bed that
seems too huge.
If you could
just see around
the corner, if
you could feel
the longing
in her wrists.
She lets her
hair flow, rubs
her skin with
the moon's pale
color, waits for
what could
blossom, fill
out like a fuller
moon or the
mound her
fingers stroke
under rose cotton
pulling tighter
over her belly

Rosh Hodesh

Tonight leaves
go copper,
go red like
a woman letting
silk fall from
her body disguising
what held her like
the old moon,
bare, glistening
almost ready to
start over
again

Rosh Hodesh

under the new
moon she
moves like
an acrobat
climbing another
acrobat's
shoulders, a
whisper in the
night, a
moment of
balancing.
She kneels on
what on another
night might
not hold her
hooked to what
glows above her

Lyn Lifshin's newest books of poetry Marilyn Monroe *(Quiet Press, 7215 SW LaView Portland, OR 97219) and* Tattoo *(Event Horizon POB867, Desert Hot Sp CA 92240)*